IMPERATOR ET REX

WILLIAM II OF GERMANY

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BY THE AUTHOR OF
THE MARTYRDOM OF AN EMPRESS

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Imperator et rex,
William II, of Germany.

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IMPERATOR ET REX

WILLIAM II. OF GERMANY

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE MARTYRDOM OF AN EMPRESS"

ILLUSTRATED

38372

HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
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TO

EMPEROR WILLIAM II.

WHO

—moving up from high to higher,
Becomes on Fortune's crowning slope
The pillar of a people's hope,
The centre of a world's desire."

38372

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Helmed and tall, on Baltic sands,
Gray as the gray steel in her hands,
A Valkyr waits, and, piercingly
Roving the mist-clad, weary sea,
An answer her blue glance demands.

Comes the sad Twilight? Shall the strands
Of Fate enmesh in bitter bands
The Gods—O thou in panoply
Helmed and tall?

Ah, never, never, while she stands
To glimpse the flash of hostile brands!
This cup, Germania, to thee
I drink. Be ever strong and free,
And guard thou royal, loyal lands,
Helmed and tall!

M. M.

IMPERATOR ET REX

CHAPTER I

THE pretty, placid little city of Bonn was sunning itself in the brilliant morning light, where it nestles beside the deep, blue Rhine. The broad river danced and gurgled as it sped away, with shoals of diamonds, emeralds, and sapphires flashing on its gleaming surface wherever the sun caught its ripples; and on the Esplanade and the Promenade the chestnuts had just burst into pink-and-white bloom, while in the "*Hofgarten*" there were some delightful bits of greensward, with fountains splashing here and there melodiously above beds of begonias, geraniums, and heliotrope. Now and again clumps of rose-laurel, of pomegranate, dotted with their crimson flowers like crumpled silk crêpe, and of sulphur-hued mimosa brought from the Royal Conservatories, raised their more ambitious heads beneath fine old lindens and Italian poplars in all the glory of their spring livery.

It was almost noon, and the cloudless splendor of the intensely blue May sky bathed every nook and corner, while in the distance the strains of a military band were faintly audible above the ringing laughter of some golden-locked, blue-eyed Teuton babies, running after flocks of pale tinted butterflies, and the noisy quarrels of countless rowdy sparrows tumbling one another in the

dew, which, like a veil of silver gossamer spangled with crystal, still lingered in the thick grass.

At the stroke of twelve a young man of nineteen or twenty walked swiftly from the "*Universitäts-Gebaude*" towards the "*Coblenzer-Thor*," looking neither to right nor to left, and absent-mindedly touching the visor of his student-cap in silent and almost mechanical acknowledgment of the many low obeisances greeting him on all sides.

It was difficult not to be struck by the lithe elasticity of the slim figure, betraying a subdued overflow of energy, a sort of repressed vitality, a vigor and a nerve quite unusual. His dark-blue eyes—marvellous, intense, and changeable in tint and expression with every varying mood—were fixed intently before him, as if he could actually see and follow the shining thread of a dream as it wound away from his active brain, and, indeed, in that seductive Lenten weather, a solitary young man's fancy might be much inclined to turn to bright and enticing visions.

"There is a lad who will some day astonish the world, for he is cast in no ordinary mould."

The speaker was an old man, not very tall, not very heavily built, square-faced, but with delicate, strong features, a rather prominent nose, a large, thin-lipped, sarcastic, firmly chiselled mouth, and humorous, restless, deep-set eyes, which were known from one end of Europe to the other as belonging to that King of Wits Prince Gortchakòw, Chancellor of All the Russias. He had his weaknesses, his foibles, but he was a true Slav in intuitive sagacity, possessed unerring acumen, and a mind as sensitive in its instincts as an electric wire is to heat, for which excellent reasons his words created a great impression upon me.

"This young Hohenzollern," he continued, in his

well-modulated voice, which had, however, a kind of trenchant edge upon it that gave it an immense amount of character—"this young Hohenzollern will considerably outshine all his predecessors on the Throne; he will"—here he waved a hand, in color like dusky ivory, but still muscular and peremptory—"be the mainspring of Germany, my dear child, and his influence will be felt throughout Europe!"

Here the Prince looked at the gold crook of his cane, just as a crystal-gazer into his crystal, and, as if he descried something deliciously comical on its polished surface; the lines about his humorous old mouth deepened and quivered, then he glanced up at me.

"Ah! you smile, madame! You think that I am overstraining my prophetic gifts," he said, with a chuckle, his eyes swimming in a glow of delighted merriment; "but no, I am not burdening my soul with an anticipatory falsehood, for there lies in wait in this boy's person a tremendous surprise for the Teutonic race, and for the world at large, as well. '*C'est le cas de le dire!*'"

We had by now arrived at the end of the "*Haupt-Allee*," and crossed the road to retrace our steps on the opposite side. It appeared to me as if there were a heady fragrance in the air, a something suggestive of a million mysterious voices whispering secrets. The sun was flooding the wide prospect with a marvellously ethereal amber light, and I turned eagerly to my sage political mentor, who I saw was still in the vein of prophecy.

"Do you seriously mean all that?" I asked, simply to set him going again.

"Do I seriously mean that this at present shy, somewhat stilted, and '*éffacé*' youth will one day astonish the world? Of course I mean it, '*cent fois plus qu'une.*'

I am only astonished that there are not more people to divine it; but, alas! one always has to look closely and minutely to see anything that is really worth seeing; the kind of moral or physical beauty that jumps at you is bound to be shallow and worthless, a mere simulacrum, an approximation to the genuine article. It's absurd—but there it is! Prince William is a nature inexhaustible of promise. He is deep as a well. Wit, generosity, race, nerve, prompt decision, energy in action, absolutely unbending obstinacy of purpose, pluck, and a rare intelligence are all there, with a great deal besides. All the mystery and magic, the essential principles of sovereignty, are there, too. He will be a man in the full acceptation of the word. I see and feel it, and the future, in so far as he is concerned, is miraculously real to me."

With which peroration Gortchakòw decapitated at one blow of his stout walking-cane six or seven venturesome dandelions staining with their dazzling gold the puritanically immaculate lawn we were skirting.

"There is a kind of intangible sense of responsibility in such sayings," I said, picking up the "dear remains" of the dandelions and tossing them meditatively in my left hand.

"There is also, perhaps, a very tangible sense of impudence in so coolly appropriating the future of a monarch that is to be," he replied, laughing. "But prophets are the most unprincipled of people, as you may now notice, and never carry delicacy too far. It is by no means a joke, I assure you, to have the 'seeing eye.' Nevertheless, I wish I could live long enough to prove to you that my horoscope is unimpeachable. Unfortunately I shall in all probability be long dead and forgotten when our young friend ascends the dual Throne of Prussia and Germany."

During the years that elapsed before these words were proven beyond a doubt, they kept recurring and recurring to me, and it is because that prophecy was so startlingly true a one that, after a quarter of a century, I have transcribed it here word for word. Indeed, that May morning is indelibly imprinted upon my memory, as vivid a picture as had I been through this curious experience only yesterday.

I can still see the little old town, with the dazzling sun-rays burning upon it, the long, irregular masses of houses standing out in varying shades of gray and dull red against varying shades of green, with a transparent blue penumbra where the clear-cut shadows fell, and the little old man walking beside me, the lines of humor emphasizing themselves around his faded lips, and his eyes twinkling with that particularly contagious "*esprit*" which one rarely encounters outside the Slav or Latin races.

I remember perfectly, too, the brightness of that spring weather, green and blue like a cluster of larkspurs, and so different from the silvery skies, aquamarine seas, and purple heathers of mine own native land.

To-day the quiet, unobtrusive, almost constrained student of the Bonn University has brought to pass all that was then told me, and much more than that; and even Gortchakòw, his Prophet in Extraordinary, were he to come to life again, would perchance be amazed at the felicity of the words he pronounced while we strolled together at random under the spreading fragrance of the acacia blossoms and the great limes, gently bending beneath the weight of their intoxicatingly odoriferous clusters of flowerets.

Often, also, my retina reacts like a photographic plate, and another picture develops itself — a quite circumstantial picture it is, too.

A stretch of wind-flogged water becomes visible anew to me, and the deck of a small pleasure yacht laboriously beating its way up the Rhine in the teeth of one of the terrible white squalls so common to that river in the early spring. Prince Gortchakòw, leaning against the bulwarks at my side, and gazing abstractedly at the poignantly sombre sky above us and at the flying foam scattered all over the tumultuous surface of the water, as by a gigantic fan, says, suddenly:

"If eyes were made for seeing, see and admire the superb contrast between the glories of this morning and the desolation of this twilight, between the merry songs of the birds we then listened to, the shameless extravagance of flowers and verdure and sunshine, the riot of intoxicated insects buzzing in the deep, cool greenery, and the infernal gloom of those bellying clouds like an army with threatening banners zigzagging up from the world's rim to engulf us."

"It's my duty to caution you," I remark, prudently, "that you will soon be drenched to the skin if you persist in remaining on deck."

"I am not dreaming of denying it," replies the Prince, submissively. "But all I have to say, if you can bear the whole improbable truth at once, is that I am going to watch this storm from here. I am appreciative of your kind care, and I may add that you are without exception the nicest child I have ever met, but my obstinacy is proverbial, and remain on deck I will!"

At this juncture a small canoe, dangerously narrow and light, appears within our visual ray. It is tossing like a cork upon the turbulent river, and looks as if at any moment it must heel over and precipitate its occupant into the swift current. As the yacht and the canoe shoot past each other, at the merest fraction of a cable's length, we recognize the slender youth paddling

against such odds, and with so fierce a contentment expressed in every line of his set face and determined blue eyes.

"Prince William!" we both exclaim at once, in terrified amazement, but almost before we can order the yacht's course to be checked and proffer our assistance the tiny craft has reached the shelter of the city quays; and although we halt for a quarter of an hour in midstream, we know that the Royal lad is safe and that he needs not our assistance, for on that young face there shone a quality of expression rare indeed and wholly reassuring, and in those deep, haunting eyes, the constant miracle of absolute pluck and all-conquering power.

"*Je vous l'avais bien dit que c'est un gaillard qui n'a pas froid aux yeux!*"

It is the voice of Gortchakòw raised above the shrill clamor of the wind; then we both look at each other, for the prophecy stands out with singular clearness against the background of our minds; and although the Chancellor adds, in his usual bantering tone, "See how mighty is the truth! See how she prevails! See how the scoffer is confounded!" yet I now feel how serious is his meaning, how perfect and complete his diagnosis of the future Emperor's character.

After a few minutes' silence I remark: "What of that crippled arm one hears so much about? He seemed to be using it pretty freely."

"Oh," replies the Prince, dryly, "those reports, like the rest, are far from accurate. It is no disfigurement whatsoever; there is some lack of power, some inconvenience, some discomfort, but with an ardent nature like his this mishap has only served to urge him on to greater effort. In every instance he is bent upon outdoing those who are not hampered by a similar defect,

and he succeeds; yes, yes, my dear, he is the very embodiment of courage, perseverance, and endurance. Don't forget what I said this morning."

Why, it is permitted to ask, have misconceptions and misleading statements always wheeled and swerved about that characterful personality, in a relentless flight like that of noxious insects? Why is the world so loath to recognize and acknowledge the resolute and forceful lines upon which it is built and the real beauties it possesses? Truth is often strange, and this one seems particularly so to the ingenious and ill-informed detractors who have elected to sit in judgment upon Emperor William ever since 1888, and, alas! even to many of those who have known him intimately from the very beginning.

There is scarcely any action or speech of his, be it ever so trivial or insignificant, that has not been seized upon by eager hands and distorted in order to gratify popular prejudices. For instance, it has been adjudged a matter of the most sinister import, that he, a constitutional Ruler, should have written *Regis voluntas suprema lex*, in the Golden Book of the Munich City Council. Now to me, as a monarchist, there is no maxim more just and right than this in its literal interpretation, but for the benefit of those professing different beliefs be it said, that the right of inscription in the Golden Book is reserved exclusively to members of the Reigning House of Bavaria, and that the Emperor, requested by the Prince Regent to write therein, at first declined, but at length laughingly complied, leaving the terrible Latin sentence merely as evidence of the fact that he did so at the command of the Sovereign.

Oh! the alleged failings of this particular Monarch have been highly colored, but — *pazienza* — misrepresentation cannot last forever, it is devoutly to be

hoped, and meanwhile, without being too copious or too communicative, it may be permissible to set right a few distorted facts, which is the aim of this simple volume.

* * * * * * * * *

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On the 27th day of January, 1859, the capital of Prussia was suddenly roused from the despondency into which it had been thrown by the intense gloom of the political horizon and by the incurable malady of its King, Frederick William IV., who, entombed in the grim magnificence of an old Roman palace, was existing rather than living out his miserable days, a mental and physical wreck, under the unceasing care of his devoted consort, Queen Elizabeth.

At four o'clock in the afternoon cannon had been fired — one hundred and twenty-one salvoes, if you please—booming loudly beneath the cold, bleak, snow-laden Northern sky, proclaiming to all the good citizens of Berlin the birth of a Royal Prince, of a future King of Prussia, and perchance of Great Britain * also—and hi! presto! the general air of dark melancholy, of resentful disenchantment, of sullen fatigue, which had enwrapped the town like a heavy, stifling mantle, made way with surprising swiftness for an atmosphere delightfully wide-awake, joyous, and bright.

The immense crowds of enthusiasts, suddenly filling all the streets and thoroughfares, might have tumbled from the skies, so unlike were they to the usually slow and circumspect population of the City on the Spree.

* As the only grandchild of Queen Victoria, and the son of her eldest daughter, he was sixth in succession to the English throne, the four preceding his mother being the Prince of Wales and his brothers, the Princes Alfred, Arthur, and Leopold. The birth of children to these other heirs has since placed Emperor William far down in the line of succession.

During thirty-six shots the throng, massed around the "*Kronprinzliche-Palais*" and the "*Kupfergraben-Kaserne*"—where two batteries of the "*Garde-Artillerie-Regiment*" were firing those momentous salutes—had stood swaying with mouths half open, staring excitedly into space, then,* as the thirty-seventh thundered forth, clear upon the frosty air rose endless shouts and hurrahs quite bewildering in their number, power, and volume, as they rhythmically neared and receded with the fluctuating motion of those closely packed ranks.

It was truly a delicious plunge from saddest darkness into dazzling sunshine, from desolation into purest confidence and exultation, thrilling and romantic and fairy-like. Nor was there anything of the immature, the unfinished, or the tentative in this spontaneous popular revulsion of feeling, for it had the strength, the poise, the vigor, and the alertness of an absolute resurrection to all that is hopeful, generous and loyal.

In the evening Berlin was "*en-fête*," the labyrinthine streets, avenues and counter-avenues of that, in those days, so frankly unlovely town were superbly illuminated, the black-blue of the winter night had been changed, as if at the touch of a magic wand, into golden blue, with broken shafts of prismatic colors caught in every sombre nook and angle, and wonderful chains of pink and blue and green and yellow globes gleaming through the shimmer of elfin-filaments woven by the busy hands of King Winter.

A thicker veil, a gauze of pearl and silver, dimmed the glacial blue of the imprisoned river and blurred the solidified surface of the palace lake, but in this dimness, in this soft blur, were held in solution all the tints

* Thirty-six shots is the salute for a Royal Princess. The thirty-seventh told the people that the Heir was born.

of the spectrum, so that one could discern elusive greens, fugitive roses, and translucent waves of lilac and amber, forming a sort of enchanted mist all around the spot where the cause of all this magnificence, the new-born babe, slumbered sweetly in his satin-lined crib.

Happy as every one was, yet there was somebody happier than the very happiest, and that was the Prince Regent (later Emperor William I.), at the advent of this grandchild, destined one day to reign in his stead! Marvelling, palpitating with new hopes, he, as soon as the auspicious news had been brought to him by his aide-de-camp, Count Perponcher—who now at the age of eighty-five is still a great dignitary of the German Court—flew down the steps of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he was at the moment, and, breathlessly pulling on his military overcoat as he ran, jumped into a passing cab — since in his impatience he would not await even the summoning of his own equipage—and promising the amazed Jehu a truly princely "*douceur*," drove in the wretched, mud-bespattered conveyance to greet the dainty morsel of humanity who was thus transforming present and future for him.

Bewildered a little by the suddenness of his grandfatherly beatitude, but conscious—acutely, exultantly conscious—of it as a delectable condition, he arrived at the "*Kronprinzliche-Palais*," and the sight that met him there banished immediately all feelings personal, for His Royal Highness Prince Ferdinand-William-Victor-Albert was not one of those coarse, red-faced, squealing infants who frown themselves sourly into this vale of tears, but a delicate, pretty baby, with an exquisite texture of skin, smooth and rosily pale, the tiny blue veins faintly visible at the wee temples, and unusually alert and wide-open sapphire-hued eyes already showing a grave underglow, as if the very beginning of life was for

him an especially perilous undertaking, to be met with extreme energy.

Poor little fellow! the firm curves of his satiny lips indicated already that energy was indeed one of the many gifts he had received as his portion.

The first little cry heard by the grandfather startled him; it was a sharp, curious little cry, not of pain, but of simple self-assertion. "I am here!" it seemed to say, and the Regent shook with mirth while yet his eyes were liquid with emotion.

Hovering around the little one, his imposing Westphalian nurse—Frau Hagedorn—was busy with a game of make-believe, pretending that some white robes—indescribable complexities of soft laces and airy ruffles—demanded her immediate attention in a distant corner, but by a series of "*étapes*" and "*détours*" of exceeding strategic value, ever and ever again approaching her newly found hero, with a very commotion of pride and gratification fluttering within her vast bosom.

It may be utterly impossible for some people to conceive the state of Frau Hagedorn's mind, and yet it is a solemn fact that before the Royal youngster was a week old, she had extracted from what she styled his "phenomenal voice" an immense amount of satisfaction. It gave her, she claimed, an impression of intense vitality, of singular power, of unknown possibilities, and, arguing from these premises, she, like Gortchakòw, would prophesy. His Royal Highness—Frau Hagedorn was, from the very first, punctilious about such appellations—would one day be a noble, free-handed Prince of gigantic moral strength and achievements. It is singular how truly inspired were all those prophecies! Indeed, she was nearly beside herself with pride at having been selected to nurse a scion of Royalty, so obviously

destined to make himself heard in the world. It is a way women have with their idols!

One day when Field-Marshal von Wrangel (Papa Wrangel as he used to be called) ventured to ask her if she considered little Prince William as "*ein hübscher Junge*" (a pretty lad), the indignant nurse turned upon the aged warrior with flaming cheeks and fierce eyes, exclaiming:

"A lad! Why, he is no lad at all—he is a Prince!"

"But," suggested von Wrangel, as one loath to dogmatize in the tone of absolute assertion, "surely a Prince can be a pretty lad?"

The conclusion of the interview is not stated, and I only mention this portion of it to give an object-lesson upon the difference existing between the devotion rampant, and the adoration regardant, which love arouses in the hearts of different feminine worshippers, and also to solemnly place on record that this particular Royal nurse was not one to stand dumb if an attack had been made upon her illustrious nurseling. Indeed, in his defence she became comparable to a lioness guarding her young, which is exactly as it should always be.

The grounds immediately appertaining to the "*Kronprinzliche-Palais*" were the undisputed domain of child and nurse, and Prince Willy, "*der kleine Fritz*"—as he was sometimes called within the family circle during his early youth—was kept as much as possible in the open air during that first winter of his life, in order to harden him, and to combat the delicacy of constitution that had from the first filled his grandfather's heart with so much tenderness and alarm.

Months passed, and the weather grew mild, the snow-filled clouds drifted away, the sun came back, and his rays were like gold that has been washed and polished very carefully by a master-hand.

How good it is to be a toddling baby! How good, especially, to be swathed in the precious laces of a baby Prince, and to try one's first steps among the blue and purple irises, the white violets, and the golden primroses of a Royal Park, in gay June weather, with the birds carolling their liquid epithalamiums far above one's curly head, and the unavoidable sparrows coming and going, hopping fussily from twig to twig and loudly twittering of affairs all-important to them, while yet they dart wary little sidelong glances in quest of imaginary enemies!

Everything at that tender age affords especial interest and delight—the velvety spiders hanging motionless in their gossamer lairs, watching for giddy gnats and venturesome flies, the green caterpillars crawling under the leaves, the dew clinging in huge iridescent drops to the thick grass, shining ruby-red in the hearts of the roses, or gleaming in the delicately enamelled cups of the "*boutons d'or*," and, last but not least, the soft, recurrent iterations of the cuckoo whispering in the middle-distance untranslatable messages of joy and of hope.

When the drowsiness of noon induces slumber, it is not a bad thing to lie curled up in a thick plaid upon the russet carpet of warm, crinkly needles beneath tall, flat-topped Italian pines, and to close one's bright eyes in slumber to the tune of some ancient melody droned by one's vigilant nurse.

All these delicious experiences and many others were little Prince Willy's at that period of which I write; but, alas for the uncertain glories of Northern summers and Royal babyhoods! They both have their cold, gray spells, their scudding clouds, their periods of sadness and of lamentation. One cannot, of course, always go on laughing and singing in the face of infelicitous weather, when the wind gurgles and hoots in the chimney like

a distracted banshee, nearly frightening one to death, and when the rainfalls drip, drip, drip, swish, swish, swish, upon the blotted landscape.

It would indeed behoove every future Ruler to receive at his birth a toy sceptre, with a thorn of gold set into its handle in such a fashion as to prick the tender flesh of the baby-hand when he plays with it, thus accustoming him to what he has to expect from the training he must ultimately receive, that he may be fitted for his lofty office!

Our little Prince soon learned to be big enough and wise enough to take interest in sterner things than the bleating of his toy-lamb and the antics of an exceedingly woolly puppy—lamentably oblivious of all the rules of Court etiquette — which was one of his most precious possessions. The time came when he no longer curled himself up in the arms of his nurse like a frozen robin during the half-hour or so of his enforced airings in the snowy desolation of a bitter Berlin winter, but marched boldly forth with a most amusing imitation of the guard's "*goose-step*," or tried to keep up with his doting grandfather, his small, golden head barely reaching that handsome giant's knee.

A giant indeed! A kindly, handsome giant, with fine, regular features and a hearty, open-air complexion. A genial-tempered, clean-minded giant, who did not devour little children, but adored them—especially this one — and who knew to perfection the difficult art of putting himself "*à la portée*" of his little companion.

During those delightful walks the boy would raise his eyes, aglow with an admiring smile, to the grand, imperial figure towering above him, while he, the charming giant, so fond of babies and of flowers, smiled too in a tender, proud sort of a way, and pointed out to his little

companion all that seemed of a nature to attract his childish fancy.

Nothing, however, pleased him so completely as when the huge sentries on guard at the palace gates presented arms to him, for he was already a passionate enthusiast about things military. Such inclinations are bred in the bone, and there is no getting rid of them. Anybody wearing a uniform appeared to the tiny Prince as if surrounded by a nimbus of gold-dust and pearl-dust, and he would throw back his shoulders, stiffen his supple limbs, and achieve a very commendable counterfeit of the trooper's manner whenever he walked out with his highly amused grandfather.

Soon many dim things were to become rather violently and painfully clear to the Royal Boy, many others were to entirely change their aspect and adjust themselves in new combinations, many more that had seemed pleasant and enticing were to assume a rather alarming significance and importance, and would shake him with tumultuous thoughts and feelings, but of soldiering he never got tired or disillusioned, which was a mercy, since to an exuberant, expansive, warm, sunny nature like his there were too many threatening shadows in that grim, glum, Spartan process which is called the training of a Hohenzollern, not to make an occasional sun-ray desirable.

Soon, too, the baby-heart was destined to swell in turn with surprise, grief, resentment, despair, pride, and hope, but his fervent affection for the army never for an instant swerved from the height it had attained at a bound as soon as he could walk. "*De tous temps*" this feeling has been even more than mere affection, for there was something of himself in it, something poignantly, intimately personal, and it is still so to-day.

To receive military honors, to have the sentinels pre-

PORTRAIT AND AUTOGRAPH OF PRINCE WILLIAM AT THE TIME OF HIS ENROLMENT IN THE ARMY

sent arms to him, was, as I have already stated, one of his keenest and earliest joys, and with a view of hastening that proud sensation the child on more than one occasion escaped from his nursery, even before his toilet was completed, to run down the palace steps and confront the sentries at their post with a smile seemingly all innocence, but possessing an undergleam of challenge in its quality.

Fixedly, intently he would look at them for a moment, then all at once the dimples about his rosebud mouth would narrow, and a ringing little laugh cleave the fresh morning air, as, having received the due of a Hohenzollern Prince, the mischievous rogue scampered upstairs to encounter the ominous frowns of his dismayed attendants.

It must have been difficult to be severe with a little creature whose eyes darkened so pathetically and wistfully when he was scolded, but nurses and governesses are proverbially cross-grained, and the melting eyes deprecating censure, and beseeching indulgence, were powerless at last to avert a grim catastrophe.

His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince, was informed of his son and heir's delinquencies, and upon the very next occasion when the embryo general, profiting by a momentary relaxation of surveillance, stole away like a thief in the night, and in further emulation of those gentry, shoeless, to go in quest of the honors due his rank, an ignominious disappointment became his portion.

It was a wondrous spring morning; a shower had fallen during the night and the air was alive with the humming of bees, the bold zigzags of swooping butterflies, and the almost imperceptible tinkle of crystalline drops falling from the glittering boughs into the fragrant bowls of the flowers beneath them, while all around were

wafted secret and delicious essences distilled by the clean, new earth and the green things growing in it.

The two sentinels at their post looked like any other heavy bodies, slow and circumspect and awe-inspiring, as they rhythmically paced up and down, but contrary to time-honored usages they held their course imperturbably and took no notice whatsoever of the tremulous little white figure standing above them.

The Baby Prince stared for a matter of some seconds, his level, fair brows knitted together, his lips parted, and many overpowering emotions concentrated in the spasmodic clinching and unclinching of the tiny hand which had been half raised in readiness for the return salute.

The great blue eyes flickered anxiously, the rhythmical beating of the lids heroically keeping back rising tears, and one adept in deciphering such signs might have read three or four separate meanings there—boundless amazement, a sort of vague terror, a profound humiliation, an absolute incapability of comprehending why a noble Prince of the Reigning House should be thus publicly insulted, and last, but not least, an overwhelming sorrow.

Poor little shoeless Prince, the lesson was almost too hard to bear! Violently, with a sort of catch in his throat, he turned, and, his cheeks the color of flame, his blue eyes flashing, he fled, racing up the broad, low steps and the wide corridors with the rapidity of a train of burning powder, his curls flying behind him, and his tiny stockinged feet never slackening their extraordinary speed until with a last agonized bound he flung himself straight into his father's arms.

"I am disgraced!" he gasped; "the sentries refused to salute me! They would not even look at me! Oh! oh! oh!" he concluded in three separate piteous notes

of anguish, giving away at last to a perfect storm of despairing sobs.

Gently but very firmly the Crown Prince unclasped the arms cast convulsively about his neck, and, looking keenly at the weeping child, asked with well-assumed severity:

"Are you dressed in a fashion to exact respect and recognition, my son?"

Incapable of mastering his voice sufficiently to answer, the culprit nodded his head deprecatingly — he just then looked upon life, no doubt, as upon a thing which had beguiled him with false promises, wronged and defrauded him sorely.

"No sentinel," continued the Crown Prince oracularly, "is permitted to render the honors to a Prince who is not dressed from head to foot"—here he glanced significantly at the little pale-blue socks now quite covered with dust—"as prescribed by the regulations. Go and finish your toilet, and do not leave your apartments again in so unseemly a fashion!"

During this discourse the boy's sobs had ceased; his soft eyes still swimming with enormous tears had wandered to the window—the tall window with its view of the "*Cour d'Honneur*," in front of which the gigantic sentries paced up and down so majestically; then slowly he turned them once more upon his father. They were immensely serious, intensely concerned, and in their farthest recesses still lurked the shame which had overcome him, as, heaving a tremulous sigh, and without noticing that there was a sort of grave relenting in the looks now bent upon him, he turned on his silk-shod heels with admirable military precision and moved towards the door without attempting to excuse his misdemeanor, but evidently bent on immediate obedience as a token of repentance.

Ah! poor little Embryo Emperor! He must have had a sense of having stepped out of a world that he knew by heart, and which had hitherto been very pleasant, into a stuffy, threadbare region from which the gilt had been ruthlessly rubbed off, and which from minute to minute would open up new perspectives, bring to pass novel and painful surprises.

Indeed, from that very day his life seemed to grow passing strange and intricate, and knotted about him like the threads of a spider's web that a bad fairy has mischievously entangled around a rosebud, for he had entered upon that solemn and portentous period when the training of a Hohenzollern Prince begins, and which, ever since the time when Frederick the Great had his education beaten into him by no gentle hands, has been Spartan enough to outdo Sparta itself in its palmiest days.

Fortunately the little Prince was the worthy descendant of a valiant race, and at the same time a true child of that Germany where discipline is a deep-rooted principle. His love of all things military helped him, too, because he saw all the rest in relation to them, and translated everything in terms befitting a soldier. The whole universe, indeed, was peopled for him with marching armies, and when he walked in the palace gardens I doubt not that he caught glimpses of the god Mars striding through the trees, and heard vaguely the sound of trumpets and of clarions pulsating through the air.

In many ways, however, the child was becoming too serious, he used his mind too much, and, although his primordial delicacy had given way to a mere frail litheness, indicating no real physical weakness, yet he gave the impression of being made of too fine and dainty a clay to be thus early subjected to so much mental and physical exercise. He was, nevertheless, by no man-

ner of means deficient in the instincts of childhood, and enjoyed a game of play as well as any boy of his tender age, but even these periods of recreation he managed to turn into very visions of heroic romance brought to life, in spite of his possessing a very solid and well-balanced little head-piece.

It was a very amusing sight to watch the little lad of six being put through his paces by tall Drill-Sergeant Klee, with all the "*raideur*" and precision that estimable martinet would have used towards an ordinary recruit. Pink with the quick rubbing after his cold tub, his fair locks smoothly brushed, Prince Willy regarded his imposing instructor with absorbing attention, and imitated his every gesture in a magnificently vivid fashion.

A difficulty stoically encountered is a difficulty already half vanquished, and truly this child looked like one who would not easily accept defeat, for within him the blood coursed swiftly and the spirit burned alertly and vigorously. He was naturally at times wayward and provoking, as all children are prone to be, but he was always generous and loyal like those in whom there is race as well as nerve and true temperament.

A couple of years later Captain von Schrötter, of the Guard Artillery, was appointed as military tutor to him and to his brother Henry, the future "Sailor Prince," who was now old enough to be his inseparable companion.

From henceforth their joint studies became a serious matter indeed, although the younger Prince could not easily be made to take a gloomy view of anything, for he was one of those rare people who find life a joy, and most fellow-beings a cause of contentment and satisfaction, his cheerfulness and gayety shining like an inward sun, by no means subject to the dire changes from

fair to foul weather which mark our earthly pilgrimage. He was the right sort, was Prince Henry, and the passage of years has not succeeded in altering him in that respect.

Up with the larks in summer, when the wonderful morning air was still keen and light and virginal, the two Royal boys were in the habit of strolling for an hour at random in the park, their thoughts as sparkling as the awakening world, as brisk and cheery as their own immediate environments.

Their favorite resort was the "*Jungfernsee*" at Potsdam, and at that early hour, when the sun had not yet dried the millions of liquid gems sparkling on bush and grass, they would canoe, playing at Red Indians—one of Prince William's dearest games—lying in wait for each other with long spears made of bamboo, or gently beating the water with the flat of their paddles, as a signal to the imaginary braves ambushed behind a screen of ferns, or stooping with paddles poised hearkening to the stealthy approach of hostile tribes quite as imaginary. At other times they would slip out of their canoes, and, boarding the miniature frigate "*Royal Luise*"—a twenty-ton cutter presented in 1832 to Frederick William III. by King George IV. of England, which to this day is the first training-ship of every Hohenzollern Princelet—and, standing upon her almond-white deck above the runes of flame written by the sun on the translucent surface of the lake, they would arouse all the neighboring echoes by firing her small cannons, the ordinary thunderous charge of lead being replaced by huge horse-chestnuts collected throughout the autumn for that purpose.

Prince William, the bravest of small figures, in his trim blue-and-white sailor suit, with the tiny anchors embroidered on his wide collar gleaming brightly, was,

ON THE JUNGFERNSEE — THE FOUNDER OF GERMANY'S NAVAL POWER

of course, captain of the "*Royal Luise*," and a very excellent commanding officer he made.

This was a sweet, happy time, when the two lads, in extravagantly high spirits, laughed over the most indifferent trivialities, their absolute, if but momentary, freedom being the cause for a swift mounting of their spiritual barometers.

The beauty of the morning sun, the crisp chill of the lake water in which they loved to dip their hands, the solemn and splendid solitude of the deserted gardens and lawns, and, above all, the calm sheet of blue beneath them mirroring the boundless turquoise vault overhead, made them feel as blithe and as happy as the goldfinches and robins vigorously ducking, fluttering, and preening their soft plumage amid jets of prismatic spray where they bathed in little rock-formed pools, a hundred yards or so away from them on the banks of the "*Jungfernsee*."

After such exploits the thoughts of those two little Princes were disposed to go wandering, and when they entered their joint school-room, they were apt to give but a veiled and fugitive attention to the dry-as-dust matters upon which they were rather tersely bidden to bend their whole minds. We have all "been there before"! But that is where the superior forcefulness of that famous Hohenzollern training came in, for all laxity was grimly excluded from its make-up, whatever the cause thereof might be.

It was hard, to be sure, when a great rutilant sun was swung high in heaven, when no leaf trembled on the green trees, and when the songs of thousands of birds bubbled liquidly in through the open windows, to settle down to work, but so it had to be, and so it was.

Heavily frowning, and with characteristic determination, the future Monarch would wrestle uncomplaining-

ly with unattractive figures, with difficult problems, and with abstruse questions that continually tripped and threw him, although his instructors, distinguished men one and all, made a point of putting these things to him with great lucidity and patience.

At length, at the beginning of one particularly ink-stained and arithmetical month, there appeared upon the scene the man whose influence was to be all-important upon the younger years of William II. I have in saying this named Dr. Hinzpeter.

In appearance the above-named pedagogue was not particularly prepossessing; tall and spare, with a mouth which gave the impression of secrecy and tightness, and eyes of a singular vagueness of expression, yet his manners were those of a man reserved but competent, and it was an unutterable relief to the Prince's parents to confide him to such adequate hands.

It was during a visit which the Crown Prince and Crown Princess made to their intimate friends, Count Goertz, President of the Hessian House of Lords, and to his Countess (*née* Princess von Sayn-Wittgenstein), at their beautiful country-seat of Schlitz, in Hesse, that they first met the Professor, who had for a number of years been tutor to the Count's own son, and who was destined to become in a great many respects the German counterpart of M. Pobiedonotzow, the illustrious mentor of Czar Alexander II. of Russia.

His treatment of Prince William was shrewd and prompt, for, judging rapidly and correctly, he saw that any undue severity would not answer with the fiery nature he had to deal with, and, although sorely handicapped by the peremptory instructions given to him to the effect that his young charge's education would have to be absolutely terminated at eighteen, and that at that period he must have become, at whatever cost, the

most accomplished and the most learned personage in Germany — a modest demand, one must confess — he made a brilliant success of the heavy task imposed upon him, and his "*manière de faire*" has been certainly more than justified by its results.

It may be said of Dr. Hinzpeter that, oddly enough, he had then many friends and no enemies; to his credit be it noted, also, that he was too frank by nature to be a toady, and that his opinions were generally expressed, when he found it worth his while to express them at all—which was rare—in an absolutely fearless and even bluff manner. Indeed, when once interested in a subject he was apt to become extraordinarily enthusiastic and eloquent, to the point almost of downright violence, which peculiarity was an overwhelming surprise to those who knew him only as a quiet, retiring, shy, and absent-minded pedagogue, sunk to the very eyebrows in science.

One may add that age has brought no chill to his blood, no dulling of those capacities so often wrongly attributed to youth alone. His rusty, professorial black still covers the heart of a boy, the hot brain of a youthful enthusiast burns yet beneath his silvering hair, and he follows his erstwhile pupil with an approving eye, although he has long ceased to be his Imperial Master's political adviser, and contents himself with being the sincerest of his friends and well-wishers.

But to return to the time when he first assumed his rôle as tutor.

Immediately, and almost without giving himself a chance to breathe, he became the comrade of his Royal charges in the full acceptation of the word. He entered into the spirit of their games, and in play-hours accepted their various incarnations, whether they represented Red Indians, Crusaders armed with wooden sabres, or

Admirals with paper hats, as most solemnly real, and from that very moment Prince William began to expand.

This change was the result of no violent revulsion, but of the kindly impulse given to his whole training by the wise Westphalian Doctor, which caused him to thrive with marvellous alacrity, both mentally and physically. Dr. Hinzpeter had, it cannot be denied, the gift of creating a pleasing and soothing atmosphere about his impressionable pupil, who felt that he was appreciated and taken seriously, and he enjoyed this feeling exceedingly, for even those who most love excitement and stimulus crave for the occasional unbending of the bow, when the soul within them obtains intelligent companionship and a due amount of praise.

CHAPTER II

Time flew on and the blunder which cost France the loss of her pre-eminence as a leading nation was perpetrated. Months succeeded months, and the little Princes looked forward to nothing with greater eagerness than to the hurried letters written home by their grandfather and their father, from beside the bivouac-fires, their young hearts beating high with pride and delight at the news of victory after victory, and their thoughts one vast regret that they had not yet attained the age to wear a real sword and do a man's work.

These months of suspense did much to ripen Prince William and to still further develop his passion for soldiering.

Winter settled down upon Germany with its cold, grim silence, and the twelve-year-old boy's impatience became intolerable. Greedily he read the despatches, and could hardly be induced to absent himself even for an hour when news was expected from the seat of war. That of the capitulation of Paris reached him as he and his brother, weary of this perpetual watching, had gone to skate on the palace lake in the steel-and-silver stillness of a windless winter afternoon. Everything glimmered as with a soft, internal lustre, each spray and sprig on the ice-bound shore was turned into a crystal spear menacing the rack of torn, snow-laden clouds overhead. The sport was excellent, the ice perfect, and the children little heeded the menace of the heavens, for hither and thither they flitted, skimming like swal-

lows on the gleaming surface, where the sharp blades of their skates left long, curved scratches of a matt whiteness.

Suddenly they noticed that the faithful Dr. Hinzpeter was beckoning to them from the shore, and they rushed headlong towards him in such breathless haste that for a few seconds they could not even ask their tutor what he had called them for.

As soon as he grasped the momentous news, however, Prince William began to dance with joy.

"Oh, how glorious!" he exclaimed; "how very, very happy I am!" He broke off short, for a hand was laid on his arm, and Dr. Hinzpeter stood tall and dark over him.

"They have fought bravely and endured heroically in vain, those poor people who have just capitulated," he said, gently; "our joy is their despair—do not forget that, Prince William."

The boy made no answer, and lowered his eyes, in which swift tears had risen. This was the first time that the other side of the question had struck him, and his warm heart responded at once to the appeal. To triumph over a fallen foe seemed suddenly mean and contemptible to him, and very soberly did he walk back to the palace, his bonny face unusually grave as he thought of the women and children, the sick and wounded who for nearly seven months had suffered a slow agony within the walls of the besieged capital of France.

All his vividly awakened sympathies could not, however, dampen the delight he experienced when his grandfather, at the head of Germany's victorious troops, re-entered Berlin, and when he, Prince William, was allowed to join the dazzling procession of Sovereign Princes, Great Captains, and Crown Vassals forming the train of the recently proclaimed Emperor.

Mounted on a little, speckled pony, the Royal lad rode along, feeling himself indeed a Prince and a soldier. On his tenth birthday he had, like all other scions of the House of Hohenzollern, been appointed Lieutenant of the First Regiment of Foot-Guards; he had also received the order of the Black Eagle, and on that exquisitely fresh and brilliant morning of the 16th of June, 1871, as he passed beneath the flower-laden "*Brandenbürger-Thor*" on his quaint little steed, between his father and the Grand Duke of Baden, his whole being thrilled with unutterable pride and joy.

Many a kind and loving eye was bent in approval upon the gallant little figure, many a strong, manly voice was raised to greet him quite particularly with a resounding "Hoch!" and many a stalwart heart heaved with loyal emotion as this small grandson of a conquering grandfather passed, his rounded cheeks glowing, his blue eyes lighted up, and his head held erect with intense gratification.

High-spirited and impetuous, overeager and thoughtless at times, still Prince William chose the good and rejected the evil almost instinctively; he began also to take a deeper interest in his studies, and, being remarkably gifted, he went apace with great rapidity, astonishing his professors by the thoroughness of his acquirement, and the clear and concise manner in which he took hold of a proposition and carried it promptly to its logical end.

The lad was desperately in earnest about everything he undertook, and a careful observer could notice that however quiet and precise he might try to appear, there was an almost feverishly intense ardor always quivering beneath the surface; but he looked the world squarely and pluckily in the face, and took his fences straight whatever happened.

It is difficult to say whether Prince William was glad or sorry when he was suddenly told that, in contradiction to all the Hohenzollern traditions, he, the Heir Presumptive, was on the point of being sent to a public school. The excessively military twist given to his education had certainly prepared him for passive obedience, but he knew without the possibility of a doubt that his beloved grandfather was opposed to the project, that Prince Bismarck—who to him was the beau-ideal of a soldier—also vehemently combated it, and therefore it may be safely taken for granted that pleasure was not paramount among the young fellow's sensations at the time.

The whole affair caused no end of disturbance at Court, and a marked and most ungenial aloofness was observed to exist for a while between the opposite factions; but the next best thing to winning is to know when you are beaten, and Emperor William I., although vexed with himself for being circumvented and for finally yielding, yet never allowed his darling grandson, the pride of his heart, to quite gauge the extent of the pain inflicted upon himself by that new departure in Hohenzollern training. This prudence, however, did not prevent the Prince's heart from being momentarily hardened and chilled, for he adored his kindly grandfather and abhorred the thought of his having been overruled, as also that of being permanently separated from him.

The process of thought of a boy of fourteen is somewhat curious, not to say obscure, and the results disconcerting. At that age, too, one is not diplomatic, especially when for the first time in one's life one becomes conscious of a rift in the lute of family affections, and thus did a, comparatively speaking, unimportant incident cause the birth of a state of things which

later on was to bear much fruit that was bitter exceedingly.

It must be confessed that being given the eminently feudal spirit which in those days still reigned in Germany, the task of the teachers at the Cassel Gymnasium, which had been selected for the Royal lad's début at school, was, at "*prima-vista*," a difficult one; but, as a matter of fact, it turned out to be the easiest in the world, thanks to Prince William and Prince Henry themselves, and thanks also to the tact and wisdom displayed by Dr. Hinzpeter during the three years which they passed together at Cassel.

It had been made clear to the tutor that his two pupils were on no account to be treated otherwise than in the most democratic fashion, and that in no way was he to allow them to be placed on a higher plane than their school-mates. Furthermore, they were not to be addressed as "Royal Highnesses," and, in one word, must be forced to win any distinction they might covet, but were not to profit by those which were theirs by birth.

In itself the plan was undoubtedly a good one, for so long as they were to mix with the inmates of a public institution they necessarily in fairness and justice could not make use of any birth privileges, but it is not surprising that those who knew the lay of the land, and especially the sensitive, nervous, and diffident nature of Prince William, should have dreaded, and with good reason, such an ordeal for him.

The Royal lad himself arrived at Cassel in a ferment of expectation, checkered with a multitude of varying hopes and fears. The mere exhilaration of the unknown boiled up in effervescence within him at one moment, while again an anguish of self-distrust shook him immediately afterwards.

What if, after all, he should prove to be a failure? At the thought little cold waves stole down his back, for he could not help picturing to himself the awful shame of it! These vague forebodings and the mordancy of such anticipations were wellnigh unbearable to the proud, diffident child, and Dr. Hinzpeter, watching him keenly, had to bring out all his artillery of sagacious fascination to disperse the brooding, the dull, vague aches of regret, and the dreary premonitions obscuring the mind he was there to guide and to train.

He hoped, of course, that the actuality would be far less unpleasant than the anticipation, and that when Prince William found himself really face to face with the situation he dreaded, his fears would disappear as completely as a blink of summer lightning; yet these hopes might be utterly at fault, and the Doctor was therefore nearly as anxious as his young charge when they reached their destination. What would come to pass there in the next few months he strenuously forbore to conjecture, for it was his business to keep his brain cool and collected and to avoid all thoughts which might bias him one way or the other.

In the meanwhile Prince William had made an obvious call on his resolution, conquered all signs of his terrible uneasiness, and faced the music like the brave little man he was.

It seems a generally accepted theory that William II. considers himself to be the most important personage in creation, a being around whom revolve the world and the stars and all space—at least so we read in the vitriolic comments of the public press of every shade and description. It is to be regretted that it should have occurred to so few people that the Kaiser's nature is too subtle and complicated a one to be judged by surface appearances or by the impulses of a moment.

Even in those days at Cassel there was a curious sort of eagerness in Prince William's manner, a picturesqueness in his way of doing things, a deep sense of the pictorial aspect of existence which was somewhat misleading, as were also his at times quick, slightly heedless fashion of speech, his rather high timbre of voice, his extreme impressionability, his reckless and laughing disregard of all danger.

All this did not then, and does not now, prevent him from feeling things very strongly and being very far from a self-satisfied, bumptious person. Then, as now, too, he was one of those fortunate wayfarers who see their road clearly before them, and for whom the barriers of duty and honor which stand on both sides of the path have no gap in them at any time.

The Gymnasium at Cassel was a plain, square, stone building, without any attempt at ornamentation, and the inside was quite as grim and forbidding as the outside. The town itself was dull exceedingly, but Prince William soon made the discovery that places and situations are never so excellent or so dreadful as we represent them to ourselves before we actually reach them.

A new life had begun for him, a quiet, studious, peaceful life, and yet not devoid of that disquietude which is the inseparable companion of all ambition. So great was this ambition that at first, in his ardor to achieve success, mere outward things became of no account. His clothes, which were mostly shabby—in accordance with a systematized scheme for the repression of vanity and extravagance and the encouragement of a "wholesome" humility — troubled him not in the least; the necessity of stuffing coal into the stove when his turn came round to fulfil this homely duty, devolving on each of the boys in regular rotation, vexed him still less;

nor did the familiarity of his fellow-students ever excite his indignation.

During the cold months, he, together with Prince Henry and Dr. Hinzpeter, lived in the plain, gloomy old "*Fürstenschloss*," a place as unamiable to those who gaze at it from without as it is chilling and deplorably depressing to those who have the misfortune to enter its inhospitable portals.

It was furnished in a heavy and ungracious style, and what meagre effort at embellishment it boasted gave but an additional frown to the "*tout-ensemble*" of this once, no doubt, very brilliant "*Electoral-Residenz*." Such an abode had nothing in its desolation and absence of any but a tarnished and threadbare grandeur, to cheer the heart or raise the spirit, and at the age Prince William was then one cannot be absolutely content with the mere barren sense of duty done, much as one may desire to be so. It cannot, therefore, be doubted that he at times must have felt the void and wearisomeness of this sad place, especially when the searching winds of the harsh German autumn began to beat at the lofty, iron-barred casements of his bare, uncomfortable rooms.

In the early spring, fortunately, matters assumed a more cheerful aspect, for as soon as all traces of snow and of frost had disappeared, the two brothers and their faithful tutor quickly left the little capital of Hesse-Cassel, to take up their quarters at Schloss Wilhelmshöhe, the German Versailles, as it is called.

The castle stands at the foot of a broad ridge of hills, peopled with companies of beautiful trees; all around run level lawns fringed with fragrant flower-beds of great beauty; and, where the park joins the gardens, hedges of clipped bay shed a healthy perfume upon broad turf seats, where Napoleon III., during his captivity there, used occasionally to sit, casting a melancholy look upon

the great fountains, which in the days when Jerome Bonaparte was King of Westphalia were the delight of that impromptu Monarch's heart.

Prince William's passion for flowers was gratified by the loveliness of those endless spaces, where the grass was thick with the brilliant gold of daffodils, the straw tints of the primrose, the rich purples and delicate mauves of violets and anemones, and the snowy whiteness of narcissi, blossoming in their millions beneath the clustering boughs of Japanese cherry, pink acacia, laburnum and lilac, that stretched their foam of delicate coloring all over the park.

He and Prince Henry stepped there into the sparkling coolness of the young day, just as they had done at Potsdam, the sunshine from without meeting the sunshine in their souls, gladly and joyously, with a thrill of welcome. But like a monstrous spider spinning its criss-cross threads, the inexorable "Hohenzollern training" tirelessly thickened its web around them, drawing it closer and closer still, although during these summer months Prince William hardly thought of the morrow, and made the most of this "*étape*" before buckling on his knapsack for good and aye.

In the autumn, when the weather became dull and gray, when silvery fogs began to rise from the lake at Wilhelmshöhe and trail their shimmering folds over the little river Fulda, the Princely Household moved back under the spreading branches of the secular limes bordering the superb avenue, three miles long, which leads to Cassel and the winter-quarters at the Electoral "*Fürstenpalast.*"

Not without regret did the Prince abandon the leafless woods in their poetic livery of golden bronze and soft, silky gray, the bare fields shivering at the near promise of snow, for, like all true lovers of the country, those

clean-souled ones who prefer the gentle creaking of moving scythes, the ripple of running water, and the singing of birds to the rattle and the murky smoke of crowded streets, he understood and enjoyed nature in all its moods, even the grimmest, when frost and ice grip the world in a relentless vise.

It would be difficult to give an accurate conception of the kindness, frankness, and friendliness which Prince William displayed throughout his sojourn at Cassel towards his school-fellows. He certainly could not be accused of superciliousness or arrogance, for he treated them all, whatever their birth or social status, with a gentle consideration quite above praise, making no distinction between them, and being only too ready to afford them any pleasures from which their lack of money or position debarred them, as, for instance, the opportunity of spending the hot summer afternoons under the cool shade of the park at Wilhelmshöhe, etc., etc.

The result of all this is that to this day he is looked upon by his former comrades as a friend far rather than as a Sovereign; and not long ago a worthy apothecary, who had been for two years at school with him, wrote a very unsophisticated letter to the omnipotent Emperor of "All the Germanies," requesting his permission to open a drug-store at Berlin. Quite simply, too, and without giving a sign of astonishment at this, a rather unusual departure from all etiquette, His Majesty caused a letter to be written to the chemist in question, explaining that he had not the least power in such a matter, a fact which he truly regretted, but that he was only too glad to promise his old "*Kamarad*" his hearty patronage should the plan be put into execution at any time.

Summer or winter, Prince William worked hard, that is certain! Often his young face was pale and drawn, for he had begun in the second term of his sojourn at

Cassel to make too free a use of the midnight oil; his rooms were lined with well-thumbed volumes of no engaging appearance, his tables strewn with papers blackened by mathematical figures, equations, and algebra. It would be impossible to live more simply than he did; indeed, a "*Maas*" of lager-beer and a couple of "*Pretzels*" were quite a dissipation for the boys when Dr. Hinzpeter walked with them in the outskirts of the little town, and they stopped for these homely refreshments at some tree-bowered road-side inn, above which the wind stirred the bare branches of the chestnuts and lindens.

Dr. Hinzpeter saw with great sorrow the moment of separation approach. This dread eventuality was daily growing nearer, for at eighteen Prince William would be declared of age, undergo the final investiture of the order of the Black Eagle, and then enter the University of Bonn, there to terminate his education.

The affections of the warm-hearted tutor were centred upon the two Royal boys, who for so long had been his hourly care, and to be no more their constant companion seemed to him a calamity beyond compare.

Prince William, who was the very apple of his eye, received many admonitions during the last weeks at Cassel.

"You are the heir to a glorious Throne," he would repeat again and again, "to great traditions of honor and valiance, to great duties and obligations; so you have no right ever to think of yourself. You owe it to your future people and to Germany to bestir yourself and to do the uttermost in your power for the good of the "*Vaterland.*" A King is a custodian, a trustee, and he must bear his heavy burden nobly in the sight of the whole world. That is your mission, Prince William, that is the work you are born to do, and I know that you

will do it, that you will take your life and your mission seriously."

The Doctor's vague eyes would light up and glow with enthusiasm when he spoke thus, and his eloquence had a very convincing and conclusive note in it; again and again he would gaze at his beloved pupil, discovering his very soul to him. Positively, the poor man grew thin with speculating about what would come to pass when William came to his own, and when finally he had to bid him good-bye his throat was dry, his pulses pounded, his knees all but knocked together under him, and big, honest tears rolled down his cheeks without his even thinking of concealing them.

On his leaving the Gymnasium a very special honor was done to Prince William, and one which filled him with the most genuine pride and satisfaction. It is a time-honored custom at the "*Lyceum Fredericanium*" of Cassel to grant to the most diligent, clever, and meritorious pupil the so-called "*Richters-Medaille*" as an especial mark of distinction, and great was the Royal lad's surprise and gratification, when in the presence of the assembled school the head-master conferred it upon him, "*in recognition of his uniform and persevering diligence and of his excellent achievements.*"

Turning as red as a cherry, the delighted Prince exclaimed in his characteristic, open-hearted fashion:

"You cannot imagine what pleasure the bestowal of this medal gives me, and especially the thought that it is a distinction I have really earned for myself. It is, therefore, a reward I shall always highly prize, since I honestly did all I could to deserve it!"

His appearance as he spoke was so genuine, his alert, luminous eyes sparkled with so deep a pleasure, that thunderous applause followed this little speech—an absolute ovation which, nicely appraised by experienced

ears, denoted not the slightest bit of adulation for the Royal Prince, but a very "*bona-fide*" admiration, quite untinged with jealousy, for the school-mate thus publicly and justly recompensed.

Suddenly transported from the inhospitable "*Fürsten-palast*" of Cassel to his grandfather's Court, surrounded once more by the glamour and insidious satisfaction afforded by stately rooms—rooms with mirror-like floors, sumptuously tapestried walls, precious furnishings, and countless art treasures, lighted up by priceless Venetian chandeliers, and always filled with the warm fragrance of exotics—the young Prince was at first a trifle bewildered.

The gorgeousness of the great purple Throne he would one day occupy fascinated him; it caused him a little feeling of uneasiness, too—very similar to that which had made his first trip to Cassel so unpleasant. Would he be worthy of this magnificent inheritance, or would he be lacking in those heroic qualities he admired so much in his iron-handed ancestors? The thought was so appalling that it was a relief to realize that two strong lives still stood between him and that momentous hour, but yet in his inner mind he was busy with this future, to prepare him for which the efforts of his entire "*entourage*" had been bent since his very birth.

Ah, well! we can only be young once—more's the pity —and young people are allowed to be pertinaciously, if silently, inquisitive as regards Providence. Prince William was exceedingly so, but outwardly, as was his wont, he gave no sign of the qualms he so often endured, and had already then, in his ardent desire to conceal what he considered a weakness, succeeded in creating the impression that he possessed neither much warmth of feeling nor much ardor. "*Et voilà comme on écrit l'histoire!*" when one permits one's self to be misled by appearances.

The tone almost invariably adopted now by the Heir Presumptive was judiciously compounded of youthful alertness and German bluntness. Equipped therewith, and with a curious play of the eyebrows, which was also as assumed as it was nonchalant, he disarmed all investigation into his private thoughts, hopes, and fears, this ingenuous device carrying him trippingly to the autumn of 1877, when he entered the University of Bonn. No! no! he was not really nonchalant, this indefatigable, eager, enthusiastic boy of eighteen — not the least little bit so—but sociability and confidence were impossible to him just then, for he was brimming over with the kind of defiance common to all those of whom one expects too much at short notice. "*Voilà tout!*"

Attended by Major von Liebenau and Lieutenant von Jacobi, he started one fine autumn morning for the quaint little University town on the Rhine.

The "Villa Frank," sleeping within the shadowy stillness of a big garden laid out in geometrical parterres and smooth lawns, had been selected as his domicile; a garden, however, fanned by the breezes from the river and gilded by the sun to one's heart's content. The interior there was, again, excessively plain, comprising neat, rather bare rooms that showed no effort of any kind to relieve their bleakness.

Soon, however, the equinoctial storms made havoc with the garden, the pretty, fragrant flowers lay supine, their dainty corollas beaten into the ground, the smooth lawns were littered with the gold of fallen leaves, and the pink snow of dismantled rose-petals, and all at once, somehow, one felt the change in nature which so closely resembles that of approaching death.

The wild force of winter and its reckless fury arrived, and the smooth-flowing Rhine became at times a riotous race of headlong water, a grand, rushing volume, vio-

lent and superb beyond description, striking in huge, feathery masses of interrupted turbulence wherever a rock raised its gray head or a promontory jutted out into the stream.

Often the Prince, who regarded the vault of heaven, whatever its color might be, as the only proper roof for humanity, marched gayly through the pelting rain or the driving snow to take his constitutional along the river-bank—where, during the summer, he had loved to sketch—his lightness of step not in the least hampered by the splashing gravel or the slippery iciness under his feet, "a brisk walk, whatever the weather," being one of his pet maxims.

The years he spent at the celebrated Rhenish University were not, however, destined to prove either as beneficent or as pleasing as the sojourn at Cassel. They were for him a complete transplantation into entirely new surroundings and conditions, for, instead of the easy and unaffected comradeship of mere boys, and the wise and genial companionship of Dr. Hinzpeter, not to mention the delightful and intimate intercourse which he had had with his brother, he now found himself thrown into the constant society of gay and festive "*Junkers*," who, overjoyed to become intimate with their future Sovereign, and keeping a wary eye on the ultimate advantages to be derived therefrom, created around him an atmosphere of toadyism and adulation.

Moreover, one of the smartest corps of officers in the German army, the "*Königshusaren*," was then stationed at Bonn, and Prince William, whose military enthusiasm was as thorough as ever, spent a considerable portion of his time, booted and spurred and decked in all the glory of his lieutenant's uniform, with those dashing and hot-headed scions of the German aristocracy.

The Hohenzollern training included, before the pres-

ent era, one feature especially galling to a high-spirited, proud nature, and that was the inadequate and insufficient allowance accorded to the young Princes of the reigning House. In Prince William's case this parsimony was redoubled and insisted upon with what one might really call ferocious exactitude, so much so, indeed, that had it not been for the cleverness and excessive economy of Major von Liebenau, who had charge of his household during the sojourn at Bonn, it would have been impossible for him to have lived in a manner befitting his rank—even as a student-Prince.

It does not seem to have entered anybody's head at Berlin then, that the young man could really suffer from such a state of affairs—Spartans, as a rule, always lacked imagination, particularly where others were concerned —but pinching and scraping are uncongenial to the young, or else they must have a special vocation for a narrow-minded and miserly existence, which inclination certainly was not to be laid at Prince William's door. It was, moreover, never willed by Providence that a youth of his complexion should pass the spring-time of his life in wretched cheese-paring plots and plans, thereby missing all which that spring-time had to offer that was sweet and pleasing. It is enough to envenom the heart and soul of any of God's creatures to be put in so false a position, and to make one churlish and sulky as well. It is therefore little short of marvellous that so unpleasant a result should not have been evoked in this instance, and yet more so that it should never have occurred to Prince William to make an appeal to his grandfather, who would undoubtedly have doubled or trebled his meagre allowance for the mere asking, and without breathing a word of it to any one. That, too, is very characteristic of Emperor William, who abhors anything not quite frank and above board.

PRINCE WILLIAM SKETCHING NEAR BONN

Before long the dreamy, concentrated nature of the young Prince was in a measure wrested from its normal development by this plunge into the world. Indeed, the old state of affairs influenced him only in so far as that he kept himself still somewhat in reserve, and that at times he preserved a strict privacy of his own.

He did not become lazy or self-contented, and his professors, among whom were Halschner, Loersch, and von Stintzing, spoke highly of his talents, application, and industry; but, although he refused to lead the silly, frivolous life of the ordinary run of rich students, yet for a boy of his age the satisfaction of almost complete emancipation, flavored with the pungent and penetrating incense of flattery, had its dangers.

Greatly to his credit be it therefore said, that his head was not turned by the suddenness of the change from the cool and soothing penumbra of his existence at Cassel to the warm, fragrant, adulatory atmosphere which surrounded him at Bonn; but somehow it was not quite the same Prince William who now went in and out of the erstwhile so silent and peaceful "Villa Frank," amid the pounding of hoofs and the grinding of carriage-wheels, escorted by a veritable "*cohue*" of vivacious "*Seigneurs*," who laughed, sang, and joked without cessation; there was a difference, subtle, almost undetectable, but of which the perverse detractors of Royalty and all that hangs thereto made excellent use, you may believe me.

It was not in flesh and blood to remain quite unmoved by the tributes paid to him during these University years, especially since that flesh and blood were virgin gold, unstamped as yet and unwrought by the cruel fingers of experience.

Say what you will, it is flattery that generally wins the day, and when a youth of eighteen, who has hither-

to been treated with great severity, finds out all at once that he cannot open his mouth without arousing thunders of ecstatic approval and admiration, that he cannot express an opinion without its being declared the most novel, original, transcendent, and altogether perfect ever advanced, is it not natural that this youth should show some superciliousness in the tilt of his nose, a "*soupçon*" of self-assertion in the twirl of his dawning mustaches, and a faint tinge of masterfulness in the straightening of his shoulders?

As a matter of fact, Prince William's faculties were at that period often in a whirl when he pictured his future to himself. Imagination flew on the wings of his desire, and there that future stood before him in all its sumptuous splendor—strong, powerful, and glowing—and, as he dreamed, his eyes lightened, burned, his blood came and went in his cheeks, his lips parted as if to express the inexpressible—the wild hunger and the wild triumph of his soul. But souls are apt to ache after such commotions, and presently the price had to be paid by a mood of desperate renunciation and discouragement, of resentment against himself and all his apostles, followed in turn by a kind of exhaustion which made the already-mentioned detractors declare that the Prince was abnormally sulky.

These conflicting emotions, so natural in a youth of William's temperament, were not understood during the visits which he paid to Berlin and Potsdam, where the alternate exuberance and depression of his spirit were alike regarded as subjects for condemnation, administered in a manner peculiarly galling to his feelings, without any allowance whatsoever being made for the mould of his character.

The Emperor alone never varied in his boundless tenderness and leniency. The dear old man was not in

the habit of chaining up his natural impulses, and his natural impulses all converged to idolize his grandson, and to succumb to the enchantment of being first and foremost in his affections.

What call had he to be Spartan and severe and a "*trouble-fête*" when his faith in the boy remained unshaken by other people's scepticism and subtle reasoning? He only cared to dispel the clouds which repeated admonitions brought upon the smooth brow of his darling. At all events, when he saw him with an unsmiling face, all the severe resolutions he might momentarily have been induced to make were checked, and the impetus of his intent broken like a dry twig, since, for him, there was then nothing more pressing and urgent to do than to coax back the smile which suited those young lips so well.

Thus did the aged Monarch persevere in his half-humorous, wholly good-natured friendliness towards the world in general and his entire family in particular, beloved and honored by all, and fairly worshipped by his grandson.

When, on the 2d of June, 1878, Nobiling shot at and very nearly killed Emperor William I., Prince William was completely prostrated by grief at first, his impressionable nature making him revolt with terrible anger against this the first great sorrow of his life. The days which followed the cowardly "*attentat*" upon the noble and kindly old man were for his grandson indescribably wretched; he felt fagged-out as by some tremendous exertion, and I have it from an eye-witness that his haggard face and miserable eyes were pitiful to behold. Nor is this strange, for I remember what a pathetic impression the wounded Emperor created even upon me, when, as soon as he was able to be moved, he came to the Austrian baths of Teplitz-Schönau, to try and recover a little strength.

To see the stalwart giant, now bent and tottering, leaning feebly on the arm of an aide-de-camp during his short little walks in the park, where the sun shone strong and clear, the birds flew merrily about their affairs, and the flowers breathed forth their perfumes, was a sight to hurt one deeply.

All the world was as it had ever been; but, oh! the difference in him! And yet, although one's heart was full of unshed tears at so piteous a sight, when one watched his patient face, his unfailing smile, and heard the brave intonation of his voice, a strange feeling of exaltation took possession of one and made one's heart beat with admiration.

He was really a man to renew one's faith in human nature, this old Emperor, so good and so simple, and so plucky—indeed, William the Great—who never uttered a single word of complaint, and in whose eyes so wonderful and clear a light shone.

How well I remember him walking slowly, slowly backward and forward on the grass one fresh, bright morning, leaning upon the arm of the great Iron Chancellor, who had arrived the night before on a visit to him! The contrast between them was almost painful, so insolently healthy and strong did Bismarck appear beside his Imperial Master, who, with his head still bandaged, his arm in a sling, and wearing civilian clothes—in itself a most unusual and alarming thing with this warrior Monarch—clung to the support of his powerful old friend and counsellor.

By-and-by they came and sat down on a wicker bench under an awning placed every morning beneath the trees of a side-*allee* for the patient's convenience. On a little table stood a carafe of water, some tumblers, and a sugar-bowl. Prince Bismarck poured some water into a tumbler, put in two lumps of sugar, stirred the

mixture with the minute attention he accorded to all he did, and, when the sugar was completely dissolved, added a few drops of some medicine or tonic to it, from a "*flacon*," which he took from a case on the table, and handed the now rose-colored beverage to the Emperor, who drank it off in a series of little sips.

I watched the whole performance from a secluded spot where I was in the habit of walking up and down every day for an hour after my bath—for I also was there to recover from an injury, occasioned by a severe fall with my horse, which had left me distressingly lame. I had not the faintest idea that I was observed, and purposely kept at a distance, but, as was soon to be proved to me, my hopes were quite fallacious!

The park at Teplitz-Schönau is a charmingly pretty place, a surprisingly jolly place, too, with clematis and jasmine climbing all over the queer little kiosks, where military music is played in the afternoon, and where wisteria twines about the trunks of the trees with affectionate persistency.

Half an hour later, as I was walking home to my second breakfast, along the sunny lawns dotted with flower-beds and rustic benches, and pervaded by a delicious coolness, stillness, and fragrance, I suddenly came, at the turning of a shady path, face to face with the Emperor, accompanied now by one of his aides-de-camp.

A smile of indulgent amusement appeared on his lips, and, as I courtesied as low as my stiff knee allowed, it merged into a genuine chuckle, the satisfied chuckle of a man whose tactics have succeeded beyond his hopes.

Very much surprised, I looked at him with absolute bewilderment, for I could not understand why I thus aroused his hilarity, nor was I less astonished when he put forth his uninjured hand—disengaging it for that

purpose from his stolid escort's arm—and deliberately pinched my ear. I was so young in those days that, in spite of "my great dignity as a married woman," the Emperor always treated me as a mere child.

"I have caught you finely, madame!" he laughed. "So you deign to show yourself, now that Croquemitaine is gone! I saw you hiding an hour ago, a flitting whiteness amid the green bushes yonder, as if my estimable friend Bismarck was the Werewolf! Tell me why you gave yourself such superfluous pains, since we both saw you as plain as day?"

I, too, could not help laughing now, and, catching the spirit of the dear old man's mood, I said, sedately:

"With sentiments of the deepest regret I must respectfully decline to tell Your Majesty the reasons of my suspicious conduct, which now humiliate me beyond measure when I recall them."

"Oh, my dear child," objected he, "I know your reasons very well." He chuckled again. "You knew that you could not take it upon yourself to be graciously friendly, and as under the circumstances you did not wish to hurt my poor, well-meaning friend's feelings, and perhaps burden my own soul with a falsehood too—since I should have been forced to explain that this is your habitual manner—you went into hiding!"

Now, ever since France has been a republic and has repudiated her title as Eldest Daughter of the Church, we Bretons hate being classed with the French, but the disaster of 1870–71 has left deep scars on French and Breton hearts alike, and, moreover, in those days my newly acquired Austrian nationality added but fuel to the flame of my very real resentment against Bismarck.

A childish feeling, the common-sense people will say, and that is just exactly what it was—a childish feeling, born and bred of the mad exasperation which the mere

name of the victorious iron-fisted General used to arouse during all the years of my childhood, even in silent, sedate Brittany. So I was a little ashamed of myself now for having allowed this "*enfantillage*" to rob me of the sincere pleasure which the kindly, cheery "good-morning" of the Emperor daily afforded me, and I dare say that I must in consequence have looked exceedingly sheepish.

No doubt he noticed this, for he immediately took up the joke again, fearing evidently to pain me by any graver allusion to my feelings in the matter.

"Well! well!" he said, with mock truculence, "I wish I could have seen you two quarrelling! But in a universe like ours nothing is impossible, for there are more things in heaven and earth than people generally dream of; so there is no reason why, instead of quarrelling, you should not eventually become the best of friends."

"Without doubt," I conceded, merrily, "everything is possible, and when one is so far on one's way to the light it is clearly one's duty to go yet further."

"That's right, that's right," approved the Emperor, with a third chuckle. "Cultivate the enemy's acquaintance, talk with him, set him thinking, and yet" — he concluded with sudden gravity—"if you did that you would be yourself no longer, which would be a thousand, thousand pities, so I will not press the suggestion."

Some hours after this characteristic little incident I received an immense bouquet of snowy Marguerites, scarlet poppies, and deep sapphire-blue "*Kaiserblumen*," tied by long streamers of white satin powdered with golden "*Fleurs de Lys*." Reposing within the flowers was a card upon which was inscribed, beneath the Imperial Crown of the august sender:

"*Admirez ce singulier assemblage, qui satisfera, je l'espère,*

le grand cœur Breton et la petite tête française pour qui il est destiné!" (Admire this singular assemblage, which will, I hope, satisfy the big Breton heart and the little French head for which it is destined!)

This was typical of Emperor William I., who was an irresistible old man, and to please whom I am certain I could have been brought to smile upon a dozen Bismarcks, even in those irrational and impetuous days of my early youth.

The so-nearly-successful attempt upon his grandfather's life was not the only sorrow which befell Prince William during his University course, for the shade of yet other troubles fell upon him with the death of his brother Prince Waldemar, and that of his aunt Grand Duchess Alice of Hesse, mother of the present Empress of Russia—events which deeply saddened the Imperial Family.

During that period of mourning the young man lived very quietly and in almost complete retirement. He walked a great deal about his garden and on the river-path below, along the racing Rhine, or sat down to sketch some of the charming "*points de vue*" with which that picturesque shore abounds, for already then he was no mean hand with pencil and brush, and was a remarkable colorist as well. When he came home, fagged-out and dusty, he used to spend long hours in his study—a remarkably simple and work-a-day room—reflecting upon the lamentable fact that life is a bundle of pins, and man its pin-cushion—a truism, certainly, but a useful one to assimilate.

He reverted to his old habit of reading much, choosing haphazard from the miscellaneous collection of volumes, comprising Dickens, Jules Verne, Droz, the German poets, Dumas, Byron, etc., filling the shelves behind his writing-table. Often, also, he would gaze abstractedly

at the many large, framed photographs of the German fleet hanging on the walls, vaguely promising himself that one day he would create a splendid navy for the Empire—a plan which since the very beginning of his reign he has insisted upon.

Meanwhile the seasons came and went with their usual praiseworthy regularity. The shining forests on the Rhine, turned to bronze by the autumn winds, were covered with their first dainty mantle of snow when the Grand Duchess von Hesse died; the river gleamed violet-gray through the late March fogs when little Prince Waldemar followed her into the grave, and now there came with the spring flowers of 1879 a more than ordinary lavishness of light and color, of depth and atmosphere into the Prince's life, something immeasurably beyond anything delicious he might have imagined or dreamed. There came into his eyes an unwonted glow —a softness quite delightful to watch. The Prince Charming had found his "*Dornröschen.*" The Prince was in love!

CHAPTER III

Schloss Prinkenau! A fair castle, looking, turret for turret and battlement for battlement, as if torn bodily from the pages of some quaint, beautifully illuminated volume of old legends. Vast, irregularly picturesque, the older portions quite grimly mediæval—a veritable lake-side fortress, with ponderous, square towers, gray stone walls, and moss-tinted machicolations—the more modern wings of gleaming granite, with fanciful carvings, spires, and pinnacles, light, gay, and hospitable, profiling their clear outlines against the vivid green of beech-trees, the dark, metallic hue of firs and pines, and the more delicate and silver-dappled tints of sycamores.

The façade, mirroring its capricious contours in the waters of an exquisitely transparent little lake, arose proudly from banks of hortensias in full bloom, two swelling waves of purple and mauve, indigo and azure, deep rose and faint pink, whereon the sun-rays lovingly lingered, while to the right and left some gnarled old willows, bending over the waters, supported clambering roses both white and red, spreading to the topmost branches their nodding fragrance.

A pretty picture, say you! Yes, undoubtedly, but "*Wacht een beche*," as the good Dutch say, for there is more to see, something in fact which, when he gazed upon it, made our Imperial hero's heart quicken and tremble.

In the depths of the park, where the sun shone gently through a cool, green veil, gilding here and there with

pinkish gold the points of the spears of grass through the interstices of the foliage, a hammock was swinging between two rose-garlanded firs—roses had a habit of climbing and clambering everywhere at Schloss Prinkenau—and in that hammock fast asleep lay a girl whose rounded cheeks were flushed with the warm, healthy shell-pink, which is the prerogative of those who prefer the air as God made it to the comparative stuffiness of even the vastest of palaces.

She was young, barely more than twenty, with softly chiselled features, hair sombre gold in the shadow, but where the truant sun-rays touched it the hue of liquid topaz—light and sparkling, indeed as if delicately powdered with jewel-dust—and a pretty mouth half parted in a smile, as if her dreams were singularly pleasant ones.

The picture which she presented was perfect in tone, shape, and coloring.

She wore a garden frock of light muslin the soft, billowy folds showing to immense advantage her slender, reclining form, while some stray petals, wafted by the light breeze from the roses above, gave here and there delicious touches of satiny red and pale yellow.

Even that sumptuous park would have looked dreary and empty had she not been there, so well did she fit in the princely landscape, so aptly did she form the very climax of that sylvan "*mise en scène*."

The grand old trees seemed to whisper to one another, as did the tall, imperial lilies, the white meadow-sweets, and the haughty peonies, scattered in the grass, that the sight was good to behold, and here and there a little thrill of inexpressible gladness seemed to ruffle like crisping wavelets a field of anemones of all imaginable changeful hues stretching "*à perte de vue*" the silk of their shivering corollas beneath the spreading boughs.

Suddenly the branches of a Siberian pine were gently parted, and a young man, erect and graceful, stepped into the bower where the hammock was swung, while a voice, youthful and well modulated, though expressing the extreme of joyful surprise, exclaimed:

"*Dornröschen!*"

The Prince had found his Princess!

This is the true and authentic story of how it came about that Prince William, invited by Duke Frederick of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg, to visit him and his beautiful wife, the Duchess Adelheid, at their Castle of Prinkenau, left his heart behind him when a few weeks later he returned to his grandfather's Court.

When he placed this newly born love of his before his family, he assumed a tone of high detachment, as was his invariable custom when desirous of concealing his deeper emotions, although his heart went hot and cold at the thought of his "*Dornröschen*," and at the inward consciousness that his way of expressing himself was but the blighted bud of what he had planned to say. So once more the ever-ready detractors had fair play, and clamored violently against so persistent a coldness and hardness of heart.

After this, indeed, William—now a full-blown Royal Prince, graduated with honors from the University, and, placed in possession of all the privileges of his rank and position—seemed determined to show himself more stiff and reticent than ever. Decidedly he was becoming a difficult puzzle to solve, for his reserve of manner was singularly impenetrable, he examined everything with his deep-blue eyes, calmly, distantly, and with no apparent interest, and when he spoke it was with a sort of gentle but icy indifference, although he certainly conveyed no impression of sleepiness or abstraction.

Finding but little sympathy around him, he simply gave none, and was so unlike the ordinary run of young men that it was difficult to imagine him what he really was—imaginative, desirous of sympathy, hungering with a strange, pathetic, and never-satisfied hunger for appreciation.

Those who, like Gortchaköw, looked far, far deeper than the surface, knew that he had been ground in a ruthless mill—a mill which comes perilously near to grinding soul and heart to powder; but how many were there clever enough to thus explain his curious attitude?

Moreover, he was at that period of life when the whole being seems suddenly to become restless with that bewildering sensation of never having really lived, and when the young man scarcely knows how he should proceed to the fulfilment of all the tasks he has set for himself, all the dreams with which his brain aches. It is called by psychologues a "sickness of the soul"—not a bad definition for people who as a rule make a virtue of rendering everything they say unintelligible and obscure.

There was yet another, however, who in those days made no secret of his opinion that Prince William was misjudged, and that he would in a near future surprise the world and make a great and glorious name for himself. This was King Christian of Denmark, who ever since a visit to Schloss Rumpenheim in Hesse (where a series of magnificent fêtes were being given in honor of the aged Emperor William I., and where the Danish Monarch met Prince William) became much attached to him.

Indeed, His Majesty of Denmark was so indignant when he witnessed the cavalier fashion in which the Imperial and Royal guests present seemed to wilfully

wound the German Heir Presumptive, that he threw a great additional warmth into his own treatment of the young Prince and became his constant companion.

From early morn till late at night the slender lad of twenty and the big, kindly, gentle-eyed man of sixty were together, and the King, filled with concern and sympathy, managed with the aid of that well-known smile of his, which went as an "*avant-garde*" to disarm resentment, to delicately probe the wounds inflicted upon his protégé, and affably, softly, and persistently applied invisible balm of a very curative nature.

When in the company of congenial people, be it said, Prince William was at once transformed, his very voice became brisk and cheerful, and its abruptness was so tempered by manifest good-will that it grew absolutely lovable, especially as there was then and is still to-day something pleasingly boyish in its timbre. At such times, too, he carried his head well thrown back in a singularly un-self-conscious manner, and not a bit rigidly or stiffly, his vehemence of action lending him nothing but an additional and very personal charm.

King Christian, a most inspiritingly young old man, dispensed comfort and amusement (two commodities which count for infinitely more with some spirits than stern reprimand and assiduous preachings) unsparingly, with the very natural result that this attitude of his has never been forgotten, and that William II. displays towards few people so great an amount of affection, reverence, and touching, almost filial deference, as that which he shows to this consoler of his youthful trials.

One of his first visits after his accession to the Throne in 1888 was to this old friend, upon whom he has not ceased to shower the most profuse and lovingly thought-out attentions, for Emperor William possesses to an extraordinary degree "*la mémoire du cœur*," and when he

thinks that he has reason to be grateful, be it for the smallest service, he knows well how to display the deepest and most touching gratitude. There is never with him any question of "shirking or burking it." It is a wonderful quality—that of gratitude—and a very widespread belief prevails to the effect that Monarchs from the very beginning of Monarchy have been lamentably lacking in this respect, Not so, however, Emperor William, who never and under no circumstances whatsoever omits to remember the very slightest kindness done to him or those he loves.

With each step that he took forward, now, however, Prince William gradually regained an equanimity that was really natural to him. Although the part he had to play was an odd and a difficult one, he faced the complexities of the game, and by the time his engagement was formally announced felt happier than he had ever been since his childhood. His whole nature now aimed at an atmosphere of tenderness and of reverent romance; but his entourage did not harmonize with such a mood, and so he kept it carefully concealed, like a man in a climate that does not suit his health, and who takes every precaution against outside influences.

All the scurrilous stories circulated concerning the many alleged intrigues of Prince William with women of all classes and conditions are the most abominable tissue of lies ever invented. Immorality of whatsoever a kind has always filled him with a sort of physical disgust and a feeling of uncomprehending wonder, certainly quite distinct from prudery, but which set him very much apart from other young men similarly situated.

The feverish brilliancy of vice was to him utterly hateful. He realized, doubtless, as all other men do, its power and magnetic influence; but those who claim that he yielded to either simply do not know whereof

they speak, for his purity of life was even frequently made the subject of unkind comment at Vienna, where extraordinary punctiliousness in that particular is not the order of the day—or night!

In the days of which I now speak Prince William and Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria were intimate friends, and the latter, who was justly reputed to play sad havoc with feminine hearts, and to be one of the gayest of the gay, looked with amazement upon the singularly blameless career of his dearest "chum," as he used to call the Prince. Indeed, I have heard him myself declare many a time that it was quite discouraging to try and get William interested in what usually attracts and fascinates benedicts, because he was so obstinately deaf to the riotous voice of mere pleasure.

I have watched him personally during a remarkably vivacious "*Fasching*" at the Austrian Court, and was really astonished to see so young a man, look as if he deliberately ignored the brilliant revellers, who were so near to him in body, and appeared so far away from him in mind and similarity of tastes. He impressed me decidedly as some one who has a great purpose in view, which serves him as a very efficient deterrent, and which, like a delicious "*mirage*" rises and floats before the real scenery that lies temptingly spread along the borders of the "primrose path." He had all the more merit in thus acting, since his birth and youth alone would have given him a marked position in the front rank of the endless turmoil, noise, and intrigue which make up "*le monde où l'on s'amuse*," and since it falls to the lot of Royal and Imperial Princes to find many beautiful and eminently desirable women, enthusiastically ready to cross in their favor the border-line which separates mere indiscretion from something far worse.

Since the day when he found his "*Dornröschen*," his

whole attitude has been charmingly chivalrous and tender towards the woman he loves, and who so truly deserves it. This grim War Lord's chivalry is not shifting but permanent, and all the romance within him has flowed instinctively and ceaselessly to the fair girl he found asleep amid the roses; all his attentions have clustered around her footstool, and their union has been an absolutely model one, with a great love and a great confidence on both sides.

Princess Augusta-Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg was a happy, wholesome, light-hearted girl, and since Prince William's visit to Schloss Prinkenau a curious little inward glow, a sense of joy and well-being accompanied her everywhere, mingling with and sweetening whatever she thought or did.

Something, too, had changed in her young face, a soft change which came and went with all her dreams of him, intensified by a grave, gentle smile, pertaining more to the eyes than to the lips, when she pondered upon her own good chance and the delicious future Fortune had in store for her. Her Prince had appeared, and, behold, his presence had merged with and intensified her "*joie de vivre*." It had supplied the one feature needed to perfect her existence!

The Princess was neither sentimental nor lackadaisical—she had far too much sound common-sense and health of mind for that—but a curiously deep satisfaction, a feeling that for the moment, at any rate, the world left nothing to be wished for, made her already extreme kindness and graciousness of heart and soul yet more conspicuously so, her light step more airy, her unselfishness and generosity more marked. She did not speak of this newly found love-treasure of hers, but her very smile said, just as explicitly as her voice could have done, "I am very, very happy."

She had awakened out of her sleep in the hammock to discover a stranger - Prince who suddenly became to her the person of first importance in the world, by far the most precious and dear, and it gave her the greatest of great joys to think of him and of the fact that soon he would be all in all to her.

No wonder that infinite admiration of her filled Prince William's heart, as well as infinite delight at the knowledge that he would henceforth have such a life's companion, he who had never felt a real, genuine, heart-flutter for a woman.

Besides, if he had been—as the ever-eager "*chronique scandaleuse*" will have it—"in love" a hundred times, it would not have in the least signified, since the sentiment he entertained for her was as distinct from that unfortunate state as a beautiful, silvery, softly illuminating, and all-embellishing moon-ray is from the irritating, depoetizing glare of a gas-flame.

This newly found tenderness was something indescribably sweet to him, who had always felt so much alone, and the reaction when he left her was dreary and dispiriting in a superlative degree. Fortunately he had her letters to console him, to put the clouds to flight, or at least to illumine them for the time being and transfigure all around him with a roseate glory.

These letters, written at a little desk gay with flowers, within the deep embrasure of a window at the far end of a cool, mediæval-looking room, overlooking the dense, velvety verdure of the park at Prinkenau, were enough to hearten and cheer the most inveterate misanthrope, so I have been told, for she wrote as if her pen had been dipped in a drop of liquid light, and a ripple of pure happiness and joyful hope ran through every line she sent him.

All those around her benefited by her sunny state of

heart and mind, for, always ready to aid and assist everybody, she was now doubly so.

Once she and her sister, now Princess Frederick-Leopold of Prussia, were walking home through the beautiful woods which surround the Schloss. It was late in the afternoon, and already in the west the sky was beginning to put on the gold-and-rose splendor of its bedtime hour; the air was inexpressibly calm, yet the green vault above the two young girls and the dense undergrowth at their feet were busy with mysterious sound and movement, for sable-winged ravens circled far overhead in the velvety blue, lapwings, bees, crickets, butterflies, and tree-frogs rustled and murmured unseen, while now and again blackbirds and green-finches gave vent to a sweet, shrill note, and ring-doves repeated and repeated again and again their soft, melodious love-call before tucking their gentle little heads beneath their silky wings in sleep.

Far above the fair pedestrians in the narrow bridle-path, between the two flower-starred walls of ferns bordering it, a human figure, bent and burdened, was slowly moving, dragging a hand-cart loaded with fagots.

As the Princesses came nearer, they saw that it was a very old woman, ragged, dusty, barefoot, and incredibly wrinkled and toothless. Pale, pinched, hungry, weary, the aged crone had upon her withered countenance an expression of dogged resolution and anxious responsibility, pathetic to behold. The fagots were heavy, and for one step that she pulled the cart forward up the hill it recoiled two, so weak were her old, heavily veined, brown hands, and so inadequate to the task they attempted to accomplish; but yet she was facing the ascent resolutely and with unconquerable courage.

Down in her heart the poor thing was evidently filled with terror lest the little cart should suddenly escape

from her feeble hold, and go crashing down the incline into the valley below, for then what could she do? Yet she uttered no murmur, and mastered her fears as she did her almost complete exhaustion, with that dogged physical endurance which is the one ineradicable quality of the European peasant of every nationality.

Without a second's hesitation, Princess Augusta-Victoria motioned to her sister to take hold of one of the shafts, while she grasped the other, and at a smart trot the fagot-laden cart was drawn triumphantly up the remainder of the hill, followed by its amazed and bewildered owner, who, with arms upheld as in unconscious benediction, hobbled along invoking all the favors of Heaven upon this merry "*attelage*" of Princesses.

At the top of the hill, when she relinquished the rescued fire-wood, the future Empress emptied the contents of her little purse into the thin, trembling hand extended to resume its task, and, without pausing to receive the incoherent thanks of the pitiful old woman, ran lightly on, racing her sister to the very portals of the castle.

This is but one of the many acts of kindness performed by the Princess during that period of perfect bliss which preceded her official betrothal, and which have not been forgotten in her own land, you may be sure.

The betrothal ceremony was to take place early in the following winter, but the sudden death of the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg was the cause of a delay, during which the Princess's new-found joy was often drowned in bitter tears.

The official proclamation of the engagement took place only on June 2, 1880, at the Castle of Babelsberg, one of the favorite residences of William the Great.

Babelsberg is a beautiful Gothic building, enthroned on balustered terraces, with countless crenellated towers

and turrets overlooking an inner "*Cour d'Honneur*" and a formal walled garden divided by yews clipped in fantastic patterns. Ivy climbs upon the walls, and so picturesque is the whole "*tout-ensemble*" that no fitter place could have been chosen for the ceremony.

As soon as the fifty-four distinguished guests had assembled in the so-called Round Drawing-room, the Grand-Master of the Court, Count Schleinitz, entered and formally announced the engagement of his Royal and Imperial Highness, Prince William, and of Her Highness Princess Augusta-Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein, and as he pronounced the last words the double doors at the upper end flew open and the *fiancée* entered leaning upon the arm of her handsome and still wonderfully youthful grandfather-in-law that was to be.

The Princess looked brilliantly happy and sparkling; her eyes were bent down upon a large bouquet of lilies of the valley and white roses which she carried in her left hand, and which gleamed softly in its circlet of dark-green leaves against the snowiness of her long-trained white silk dress. Upon her sunny head was set a white hat covered with lilies of the valley—"*Maiglöckchen*" (May-bells), as they so prettily call them over there, and six rows of admirable pearls were fastened at her throat by a magnificent diamond clasp. The afternoon was bright, and the sun flooding in through the open windows shone full upon her and upon the old Emperor, showing distinctly how strong and powerful this remarkable man still was, spite of time and all that time had brought of fatigue, anxiety, and danger; how stalwart in his perfectly fitting uniform, with his ruddy complexion, and the proud and gratified expression hovering around his lips and flickering in his kindly, honest eyes.

At a sign from him, Prince William advanced, and, of-

fering his arm to his betrothed, led the cortège to the banqueting-hall, where a splendid lunch was prepared.

Every one present remarked the happiness expressed in the Princess's countenance, and which seemed to visibly emanate from her whole graceful person—the sparkle of her radiant blue eyes, in which there was a suggestion of beautiful hidden depths of love and tenderness that none had yet fathomed. Far away down in these depths was her soul, her real self, which had been called to life by the voice of her Prince.

And the Prince, in this moment when she was being proclaimed his before all the world, gazed at her with a great tenderness in his eyes, and a great wonder, too, as if he, whose thought hitherto had ever been devoted to her happiness, suddenly saw his own barren and rather sad life transformed into an endless succession of days bright with joy and hope.

As soon, however, as he felt that he was observed, he froze up again into proud reserve; but when his eyes were irresistibly drawn anew to her, her influence reasserted itself with the suddenness of a ray of light upon a jewel, transforming him utterly, humanizing him as it were, and melting the surcoat of ice in which that famous Hohenzollern training, and other circumstances too long to recount, had managed to imprison the warm-hearted, ardent youth for so long.

It was a great day for all, this betrothal at Schloss Babelsberg. The whole castle was decorated and wreathed with flowers, palms, and blossoming plants; the "*crème de la crème*," the very "*élite*" of the Prussian aristocracy, was present, while letters and telegrams from hundreds and hundreds of well-wishers arrived constantly. Indeed, it was an event which had had no parallel at the Court of Berlin for many, many years, for was not this love-match between the heir of the

Hohenzollerns and the daughter of the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein—whose patrimony had been engulfed in the Kingdom of Prussia—also a sort of reparation, the complete eradication of a feud?

The pretty little Duchies, with their treasures of lovely forests and pasture-lands which "*Dornröschen*" loved so well, were going to be hers now, once and for all time. Not that she would not willingly have sacrificed fifty Duchies for one look of her lover's eyes; but still the cannon firing joyful salutes from the keep at Babelsberg had a singularly triumphant and, yes, peaceful echo in response to its warlike din on that momentous afternoon.

Unfortunately such felicitous hours cannot last forever, and soon Prince William, separated anew from his Princess, became once more the grim, glum, laconic young man, whom so few understood or sympathized with. Morose and listless, as if every vestige of sunshine had again been torn out of his life, he turned to military pursuits with almost passionate energy, in order to drive away the persistent melancholy, the unsatisfied yearning engendered by her absence.

Interest in everything pertaining to the army was so deeply inbred a characteristic of this son of a warrior race that he really loved spending his days in drilling his men, his evenings in poring over books of strategy or the "*Kriegspiel*," which both in Austria and in Germany is an obligatory occupation for staff-officers. He perplexed himself for hours together as to whether the condition of the troops in peace or war could not be ameliorated, and he was a truly gallant figure when, at the head of his men, he sent his commands ringing loud and long upon the early morning breeze with the resonance of steel smiting against steel.

It was noble and austere, the life led at that time by

the young Prince, but it was lonely and monotonous, too, at an age when one cares generally for diversion and amusement; still, during these months of separation, the remarkable plans which later on were to bear abundant fruit and cause the German army to become the first and foremost in the world, and to bring into existence the fine German navy of to-day, were first originated by that active brain; and so he himself must scarcely now regret that dreary interval.

Even those who contemplate a contemporary Monarch's life with that sublime indifference which is the only true philosophy ever displayed by the anti-monarchical, cannot deny that Emperor William's career, even if merely set down as a series of events, would make what the literary critics call "good reading." Add the connecting links which a more intimate knowledge of the question permits, and the least clever of writers cannot but present to the reading public the portrayal of a man who has always known what he wanted, and has reached his aim with an energy seldom encountered in this age of supreme "*veulerie*."—I apologize humbly for using French slang, but, as it happens, there is no word in English which can so well express my thoughts.—But to pursue.

Prince William was not a man to forget what he considered to be his duty—you may rely on that. He might have lived a pampered, idle life, had he so willed it, in some sunshiny little garrison town, but he preferred Berlin and its gray skies, its unappreciative atmosphere, constant labor, and the over-exertion that tastes of utter weariness at times, for he believed that an army which stood so conspicuously in the front as did that of Prussia in 1870–71 could be borne on to yet greater efficiency, and he cherished the belief that he, its future Generalissimo, was the man responsible for its ultimate welfare.

Although this is scarcely yet the moment for me to enter into that portion of his work—even were it my intention to do so at length—it might be mentioned that the important new army-laws signed by Emperor William I. on February 11, 1888—a few weeks before his death—and which were the starting-point of the reforms in organization that have brought the German army to its present state of almost perfection, were inspired in a great measure by Prince William. And be it said again, in spite of all that was murmured at the time against him, both in Germany and abroad, those who had eyes to see must have then, at least, perceived, if looking with understanding at his square chin, his steady, brilliant eyes and clean-cut features, that they stood in the presence of that rare and invaluable creation—a strong man.

The power of concentration is a gift in itself, extremely enviable, and this gift Prince William possessed to so unusual a degree that, whatever his study or pursuit of the moment, he gave himself up to it body and soul.

On the parade-ground he who was so bitterly and sneeringly accused of caring too much for his appearance and dress, gave not a thought to his muddy boots or to the condition to which wind and weather often reduced his uniform, but went through all the routine duties pertaining to his rank as an officer with a punctiliousness and thoroughness which seemed almost unconscious and mechanical, as indeed it may well have been, since his brain was always working at a high rate of pressure in the furtherance of his favorite schemes. Surely there is nothing finer than a man who works with his brain as well as with his arm at one and the same time.

Fencing was at that period Prince William's pet recreation, and it was really a pleasure to watch him in

what the French call an "*assaut d'armes.*" So quick were his movements that the eye could scarcely follow them; truly he was as graceful, lithe, noiseless, and swift as a panther, leaping forward and falling back on guard like a flash, performing a hundred tricks of the fencing-floor with marvellous celerity, and touching his adversary on shoulder, arm, and chest so persistently that it took a very first-class blade to oppose his. He never awaited the attack, but was always the assailant, and, although in those bouts his "*fleuret*" was naturally quite harmless, yet the way in which he made it resound through the air vividly suggested the threatening note of combative steel.

Upright and still and thoughtful, with quiet, remembering eyes, speaking but little in his gently abrupt way—for the last two years had taught him to weigh every word he uttered, and he never said more than he meant—such was the *fiancé* awaiting the hour that was to unite him to the woman of his choice, and whenever she saw him he conveyed to her in one look the knowledge that she was the whole world to him, and that his love and boundless trust were thrusting upon her the greatest responsibility that any soul can carry —that of making another life as complete a happiness as human nature is permitted to obtain.

She herself said, just before leaving her dear old home to make her formal entrance into Berlin: "I do not in any way imagine that my new life will be a thornless bed of roses, but I have faith, and Wilhelm also, and we have agreed to share our sorrows, as we will share our joys, so that the burden, whatever it may be, will never be too heavy for our joint strength."

This creed, without compromise, was surely a touching and a beautiful one for a young girl whose destiny was to be the loftiest which the world has to offer, but

hers was that fine, steely strength which endures through a lifetime without a flaw, that profound, unchangeable love which, when her eyes rested upon him, lighted them up with a gleam that was strangely adoring and at the same time dimly protecting and maternal.

She was at the parting of the ways, was Princess Augusta-Victoria; none could point out her path excepting herself, but that path was an assured one, since it led her to the arms of the man who was all in all to her, and whom she so implicitly trusted that she would have liked to cry out aloud what she knew him to be. She was sure of her lover, which is perhaps happiness enough for this world, and at his side she knew that duty would be made easy.

The feudal spirit, which is as strong in German and Austrian Princes to-day as it was hundreds of years ago, found in this young girl a very lovable expression. She had taken it, for instance, as a matter of course, that it was her duty to care for the tenants and peasants on the Prinkenau estate, and to relieve as far as lay within her power the distress which comes to the poor during the winter especially, and when the time came to bid them good-bye her heart grew heavy. Clad in a serviceable, short, tailor-made frock and a jacket and cap of black fur, she spent the greater portion of the day walking from cottage to cottage giving a little parting souvenir wherever she went, listening patiently to the old story of poverty and privation, and cheering the tellers with her radiant smile, her quick sympathy, and her whispered promises of better things to come. She was brisk and cheerful in her well-doings, this gracious lady, destined to ascend the steps of a Throne, although somewhat intolerant of anything that savored of laziness or lack of courage, and she parted with a

good deal of sound advice during her swift rambles along the frozen paths of her domain.

The snow lay thickly upon the ground, and often it was quite dark when she returned from visiting some distant cottage in the depths of the pine-woods, the trees around her standing grim and rigid, braced by the iron frost to bear their burden of icicles without creak or rattle.

There is no silence like that of a Northern pine forest in winter, nor anything half as magnificent as the picture it presents when the trees are snow-clad, and when the silvery twilight of the crystallized boughs which conceal the noiseless creatures, furred and feathered, that take shelter there, meets the long, golden twilight of those regions, creeping in rosy and metallic gleams together to the most distant corner and hiding-place.

At last, just on such an evening, the Princess's task came to its end, and she hurried home to the castle, glowing from its dark setting of evergreens with the brightness of a rare jewel. Quickly she entered the hall where the portraits of her warrior ancestors rose one above the other to the groined and heavily carved ceiling, and ran up-stairs lightly as a bird to take leave of the house-servants. Many of them had been there long ere she was born; some of them had told her, when she was as yet little more than a baby, inspiring family legends, full of hazardous exploits and daring courage, narrations pregnant with the simple and unconscious grandeur of the men of days long gone by, to which she had listened, her blue eyes wide open and fixed, fascinated and enthralled until the last word had been spoken and she had heard in imagination the last charge of cavalry thunder past, the last droning rattle of the murderous arquebuses, the last cry of triumph from the heroic victors.

Now, too, a last word had to be spoken, and it was one of adieu to those faithful souls, who seemed to form part of her own family, so long had they served it. Bravely their young mistress held back her tears and left to them all the remembrance of that fascinating, brilliant smile of hers, so winning and so true; and when the last hand had been pressed, the last benedictions showered upon her fair head, she departed from Schloss Prinkenau, where she had lived so happily and peacefully, accompanied by the regrets of all.

One of the charms of Princess Augusta-Victoria was her honesty of purpose; her simplicity of manner, which was that of strength—comprising much gentleness and excluding all violence. Her smile, too, was full of loyal confidence, and showed that she never could entertain a doubt about accomplishing her intent. She had agreed with her lover that as long as life endured there would never be any foolish misunderstandings between them, that they were to be frank in all things, and to take frankness each from the other without offence, that any peril to be encountered, any risk to be run, was to be divided share and share alike. So what had she to fear from the future? Never had she cared so much for him, never had she recognized his value so thoroughly as at the moment when she set off to rejoin him, no more to leave his side. His words of love seemed to go ringing down the world with her, persistent in her ears, spoken with the very accent of his voice. She knew that she would hear them thus to the end of time, and gather from them joy and courage.

CHAPTER IV

It is a custom with the Hohenzollerns that the Princesses with whom they ally themselves should start from the Castle of Bellevue to make their formal entry into Berlin; and at sunrise upon the morning of January 27, 1881, the men employed in the superb greenhouses of the Thiergarten were already busily decorating, not only Bellevue itself, but the entire "*parcours*" to be followed by the bride's cortège.

This was to be a very gorgeous pageant, and long before the moment when her great, gilded coach, drawn by eight magnificent black horses, made its appearance upon the rose-strewn avenue leading to the "*Brandenbürger-Thor*," thousands upon thousands of people lined the way—a "*via triumphalis*" garlanded, beribboned, and oriflammed—which later on was to resound with the loudest cheers and hurrahs heard there since the return of the victorious Emperor in 1871.

The crowd was amazingly well behaved, and, until a flourish of trumpets announced the approach of the fair "*fiancée*," silent and impressively still, although it was easy to perceive that every now and then a thrill of expectation passed like a wave over the multitude, which suddenly swayed against the cordon of soldiers standing with grounded arms all the way from the gates of Bellevue to those of the Royal Palace.

The whole town was charmingly decorated, rich and squalid portions alike, the palaces, the churches, the hovels, the brilliant emporiums and the dark little

shops, having hung out flags and pennons, draperies and wreaths of green twigs of oak and laurel and pine, in enthusiastic testimony of an ardent desire on the part of the Berlinese to receive this future Empress fittingly.

The welcome was very complete, the long magnificence of that dazzling procession, the great thoroughfares with crescents and stars and garlands of flowers emblazoning all the houses, the exuberant joy of the people—everything, down to the smallest detail, was perfect, and must have been indeed gratifying to the new-comer.

And where, meanwhile, was the bridegroom? With that martial coquetry which has been a characteristic of so many great soldiers, Prince William had determined to greet his "*fiancée*" at the head of his company of Foot Guards, those gigantic soldiers whose towering peaked shakos of white metal, and uniforms prodigal of gold and embroidery and trappings—and therefore very brilliant and very goodly to behold—remain the same as in the days of Frederick the Great. So, ere break of day, he had started for Potsdam to rejoin his men, this gallant, courageous, generous young officer, so greatly beloved by them, and a few moments before the arrival of his bride had led them, "*musique en tête*," into the "*Cour d'Honneur*" of his grandfather's palace.

The meeting of the lovers was one of the prettiest sights imaginable, and is remembered to this day in Berlin. The bride, after alighting from her great, gilded coach, advanced a step or two towards him, her exquisite white robe gleaming and glowing as she moved, and the flowers at her breast looking no whiter than her face—suddenly blanched with deep emotion—while the Prince, slender, of middle height, but long limbed and well knit like an athlete, took her hands in his, bending low over them, and then kissed her gently on both cheeks.

The old Emperor, whose face was positively beaming with joy, made the premier-lieutenant of his grandson's company a captain on the spot, so as to enable the Prince to leave his command for the time being, and this gracious act caused a moment of delighted, intent silence—a sort of pause closed by the drums and fifes thrilling suddenly with a startling clearness, like a sharp volley of applause, diminishing and growing again in volume as the colors were dipped in honor of the bridal pair and the promoted officer.

In the years which followed, that moment was to recur again and again to the recollection of those present as something peculiarly solemn and imposing. The big Grenadiers, with their immense, old-fashioned headgear, the file of gilded equipages, the palace steps thickly strewn with rose-petals, the young people gazing so lovingly at each other under the benignant contemplation of the Great Emperor, the newly appointed captain, red with pride, standing at attention with his drawn sword, and behind him the drums and fifes calling loudly and then dwindling to a sort of soft martial rhythm, beckoning, as it were, the bridal pair towards a brilliant future—all these details made up a picture of which no lapse of time can ever quite efface the splendid coloring and happy significance.

The wedding was in itself a truly Regal ceremony. The chapel of the castle, a spacious and lofty octagonal building in the Byzantine polychromatic style, shimmering in a haze of dazzling light, was filled with flowers and crowded with exquisitely gowned women and men in glittering uniforms. Among the guests were Their Majesties of Saxony, Grand Duke Alexis, Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria, the Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Sweden, the Prince of Wales (now King Edward VII.), the Grand Duchess of Baden, Princess Chris-

tian, the Duke of Edinburgh and his Duchess (*née* Grand Duchess Marie-Alexandrowna of Russia), the late Duke of Aosta, and a score of other illustrious personages, followed by their Ladies and Gentlemen-in-waiting, all attired with the greatest magnificence.

The bride herself, who looked remarkably to her advantage, wore white-and-silver brocade and priceless antique lace clasped with flashing diamond buckles which supported trails of freshly gathered myrtle and orange blossoms. On her blond head the crown of Prussia's Princesses sparkled above a tiny fringe of myrtle, and her long lace veil enwrapped her with a sort of delicately vaporous mystery. Her tall, exquisitely modelled figure carried off the Hohenzollern diamonds to perfection, and as she walked down the aisle, leaning on the arm of her young husband, an audible murmur of approval made itself heard — a great and unusual tribute in an assembly which few sights are capable of pleasing or of astonishing. Her train was carried by her four bridesmaids — the Countesses Victoria Bernstoff, Pauline Kalckreuth, Mathilda Keller, and Mathilda Puckler, accompanied by the Princess's Grand Mistress of the Robes, Countess Brockdorff—and as the procession left the altar thirty-six salvos of artillery boomed forth, almost drowning Händel's "Hallelujah" chorus rolling grandly from the organ. Slowly and imposingly the cortège returned to the "*Weisse-Saal*," from which they had started, and where a "*Défiler-Cour*" now took place, followed by a "*dîner de gala*" in the "*Rittersaal.*"

During all this trying ordeal Princess William—as she was henceforth to be called—bore herself with the most charming simplicity and self-possession; she seemed to have a fresh smile for each new person presented to her, and yet there was not in her attitude the least little bit of that modern forwardness which passes under the

name of "*bonne camaraderie*," for she was "*très Grande Dame*," which is the highest compliment one can pay even to a Royal Lady.

Moreover, her graceful uprightness of carriage and the wholesome rose of her fresh, young face, distinguished her at once among the pallid "*mondaines*" surrounding her, and made her remarkable, as some free and dignified denizen of the forest in the midst of domesticated lions, or, to be less grandiloquent, like a pure, dew-washed, fragrant, open-air blossom, raising its dainty corolla above an intoxicatingly perfumed mass of forced hot-house blooms.

Added to this she had more to say than other girls, whether Royal or otherwise, a larger stock of knowledge, a wider range of serious thoughts, and in giving expression to them she looked brighter, prettier, and more intelligent than they—a novelty, indeed, after the small-change of ordinary Court gossip. Nor is it a small thing to be exposed to the flash of experienced eyes, which see without appearing to look, and to please those mercilessly critical optics, and yet everybody was unanimously conscious that her presence caused a curious "*fraîcheur*" and vitality to permeate the atmosphere, like a breath of reviving and bracing air in a close place.

All those assembled there to wish her luck were pleasurably surprised, and there was a general sense of joyful relaxation as the illustrious guests took their places around the brilliantly lighted board, groaning beneath its weight of massive gold and silver plate, banks of exotics, Venetian crystal, and pyramids of superb fruit. Everybody's characteristics became rather more accentuated than before, every one was at Philharmonic pitch and at his or her very best.

Popularity and lasting appreciation would have fol-

PRINCE HENRY OF PRUSSIA, BROTHER OF THE EMPEROR

lowed this excellent first impression as naturally as day follows night, but unfortunately those accustomed to read the signs of favor or disfavor in a monarchical firmament, felt at once that there was hidden deep below the surface-welcome accorded to the Princess an icy undercurrent, which it would not be advisable to stem or to disregard, for so to do would be to affront some of the powers that were. Therefore the seeds of much that became painful later on were sown in that very hour.

According to an ancient custom dating as far back as the Middle Ages, the younger Hohenzollern Princesses waited upon the Emperor and Empress, the King and Queen of Saxony, and the bridal couple, and at dessert the aged Head of the House rose and proposed the health of Prince and Princess William, in terms so tender and affecting that his words thrilled many hearts with a warmth not felt for years.

Prince William himself looked as if he were a little dazed; his bride's all-pervading charm made him perchance once again distrust himself as utterly as he had done before on the other great occasions of his life; this newly found joy of his was so intense that it started upon him as if he had hitherto been asleep in a dark room and had now awakened to find it suddenly blazing with lights. Artistically speaking, the change should have been modulated a little more, for it was just a shade too abrupt for comfort, a little too Wagnerian in its violent change of key, and for once, while his grandfather was speaking, he was thrown off his guard, his breast heaved with intense emotion, his blue eyes shone through a mist, and the white line of his teeth just showed closely pressed on his under-lip. But "*Bah!*" happiness does not unfocus one for long, even when one is unused to it, and it is comparatively easy to adjust one's self to a new view of things when these things are

pleasant. His beloved grandsire's eloquent phrases, which said enough, but not too much, of the past and the future, with a grace entirely remote from a form of address generally halting and somewhat uncouth, gave him time to recover his perfect equanimity, and few noticed this strange little break in his customary composure.

A woman is never too young or too old, too guileless or too innocent, to be averse to the thought that she can charm, and the bride was not insensible to the delicate compliments paid her in that gracious speech, and which throughout dinner in that great hall had been laid at her feet by many of those present; while the guests seated at that magnificent table murmured among themselves that this golden-haired, soft-cheeked, lace-enwrapped "*Mariée*" was "*jolie à croquer*," as she chatted frankly, unaffectedly, and pleasantly, now and again resting a glance of tender affection upon the stately figure of the aged Emperor, or one of deep love upon her young husband.

At last the boom of cannon was heard in a final salute, and the "*Herrschaften*" rose to return to the White-Hall, where the "*Fackeltanz*" was to take place.

This form of entertainment—by no means an unqualified entertainment, but a mere matter of form and time-honored usage, infinitely boring for the participants, and not very attractive for on-lookers, satiated with such pageants—began as soon as the Emperor and Empress, together with their Royal guests, had disposed themselves on and around the dais.

The "*Polonaise*" was preluded by a brilliant chromatic passage compelling silence, and the twelve Cabinet Ministers, who were to act as torch-bearers, advanced towards the bridal pair, preceded by the Grand Master of the Ceremonies tapping his ivory wand of office upon the polished floor.

Suddenly the call of a silver trumpet thrilled through space like a vibrating spear of sound, and at the moment when the twelve Excellencies stepped forth two by two, followed by Prince and Princess William, hand in hand, that call broke like quicksilver into a thousand rounded fragments of harmony, collecting themselves again, quavering and trilling, and ceasing only for a few seconds, quite abruptly, when, having returned to the Throne, the Prince and Princess bowing low before the Emperor, the procession started anew, accompanied this time by the handsome old Monarch himself, while the dazzling crowd, forming a much bediamonded and bestarred hedge on both sides, bent at their approach and straightened itself again like a field of shimmering wheat after a gust of breeze has passed over it.

In this fashion, and always preceded by the ministerial torch-bearers, the bride and groom performed circuit after circuit of the great hall, she between two Kings or Princes, he between two Queens or Princesses, a rather harassing and tiring ceremony, but during which the honors were severely and justly divided—the Courts of Berlin, Vienna, and St. Petersburg being the only palaces nowadays where scrupulous exactitude is still observed in such matters, and where no "*passe-droits*" are ever allowed.

At last the end came. The long-suffering twelve were relieved of their torches by twelve gorgeously attired pages, and the now slowly paling luminaries were used to light the newly married couple to their apartments.

During all this time an army of Court lackeys and small officials were arranging with a great deal of method and quickness the endless array of wedding gifts to be displayed on the morrow "*en grand gala.*"

It seemed for the time being as if chaos, a brilliant one, had resumed its reign, or as if all the great shops of

the universe had been sacked and their contents poured into the Royal palace.

Here stood a collection of marvellous Dresden-china vases, big enough to hold Ali Baba and his forty adventurous companions, there some superb bronzes were huddled together for company against rolls upon rolls of priceless rugs and embroideries, creeping like a tide of rainbow hues to where richly framed pictures and exquisite engravings lay prostrate.

Here again a mountain of "*écrins*" revealed their blazing contents of diamonds, pearls, rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, where they were piled upon cushions of deep purple, while half a hundred pieces of gold and silver plate gleamed beneath the flame of the countless candelabra wherewith the place was illuminated "*à giorno.*"

All night through the work proceeded, and at dawn order had emerged triumphantly from chaos, and the splendid gifts sent by the cities small and big of the German Confederation, as well as those presented by family and friends, were artistically disposed amid flowers and palms to the entire satisfaction of the most exacting taskmaster.

The extraordinary rapidity and perfection with which all these difficult manœuvres were accomplished and brought in time to so gratifying an end, were to be placed to the credit of a system inaugurated then by that arch-organizer Prince William, and which to this day is scrupulously observed upon any occasion of ceremony at the Court of Berlin.

On what we call in Brittany the "*Retour de Noces*" namely, the "post-wedding-day," a magnificent banquet was given at the palace, to which were bidden all the Royalties and Princes then in Berlin, the Diplomatic Corps and Special Envoys, the Ministers of State, the

Knights of the Black Eagle, and a host of other great dignitaries.

The White-Hall resounded with the sound of many voices, German, English, French, Russian, Italian, and Spanish, mingling in the perfume-laden air. A mile of torches lighted the guests to the palace, which was itself a blaze of glory, while the "*Weisse-Saal*" was displayed to the utmost advantage by means of tall "*torchères*" burning rosily in capricious tongues of shimmering flame.

This exquisite illumination exhibited vividly the great, purple Throne, raising upon this background with clear distinctness the arms of the Reigning House, encircled by their bold motto, and Prince William, totally unmoved in appearance, several times fixed his gleaming blue eyes upon the spot where they stood out in sharp relief. There was yet observable at such moments a curious tightening of the lips, which gave the impression that his soul was just then diffused through the net-work of his nervous system, and that every individual nerve was thrilling with strongly repressed emotion.

The grand hall was hedged with immense palms and exotics, and the harmonious twitter of stringed instruments accompanied "*en sourdine*" the gay chatter of the brilliant throng. The festive board itself was regally sumptuous, beneath its load of precious plate and priceless crystal and china; graceful garlands of white and pink orchids meandering from one cluster of myrtle, orange, and snowy roses to the other.

Pages clad in scarlet and gold, with jewelled rapiers at their side—for they were all of gentle birth—and scarlet-plumed cavalier hats slung upon their shoulders by silken cords, attended and served the Emperor, Empress, Prince and Princess William, and their Royal guests.

The bride wore a rich satin gown veiled by precious lace, and a priceless necklace of diamonds, matching those of the diadem crowning her shapely head, and, although every eye was riveted upon her during most of the time, she did not appear to be the least shy, self-conscious, or embarrassed. This was not a woman to be overlooked, for there was nothing insignificant about her; on the contrary, she would have been distinguished anywhere and in any company. Her keen, proud, but yet soft glance, her low but clear, penetrating voice—one of those voices that without being raised in the slightest degree are audible in every corner of a room—the mixture of simplicity and dignity which so greatly characterized her every gesture, proved superabundantly that this was indeed a woman born to be an Empress.

The banquet of that night, the gala opera by which it was followed, were gone through by all with unflagging spirit. Everything had been superbly done, for the former traditions of the House of Hohenzollern were not merely equalled but greatly surpassed, and, as nothing succeeds like success, Princess William, with such a début as a stepping-stone, would have entered at one bound into the good graces of her young husband's future subjects, had it not been for the consternation caused in certain breasts by this enthusiastic reception, a consternation which begot an emphatic and strangely ungenerous desire to crush her down as speedily as possible.

At Court, as in all places where ambitions flourish in a favorable soil, new arrivals have not always a very good time of it; it is every one for himself and the devil take the hindmost—as the good old sporting phrase goes! All the more is it so when private jealousies are rampant, for then mischief is surely brewing. Princess William's

individuality was too marked and too rare, she was too uncommon in her grave, kindly way, too refreshing in her total lack of affectation amid the artificial graces of our machine-made age, not to arouse such hostile feelings. And, as a matter of fact, she did.

On March 2d, the young couple made their entry into Potsdam, where they were henceforth to live. They were both very happy, and looked joyfully forward to the pleasure of organizing their palace and Household—modest ones it is true, but complete, and possessing the supreme charm of being all their own—a home to found and lovingly build up with the all-prevailing German "*gemüthlichkeit*"—a word for which I can find no English equivalent, unfortunately, expressing, as it does, the charm of the kindly atmosphere of loving companionship and mutual dependence which pervades the homes of the Fatherland, whether of the peasant or the Prince. And especially they had each other.

The young husband, just turned twenty-three, no longer brooded in his loneliness. His "*Dornröschen*" had come, and, behold, her presence supplied the element needed to make life acceptable to him whatever might come to pass. Every subject, all subjects, subjects the most discrepant, seemed to possess now one common property, that of leading him straight to her. Outwardly, to all seeming, assurance was the key-note of the Prince's conduct, though when alone his assurance had a knack of giving place to a very real diffidence; but his marriage made all the difference in the world in this respect, for she, the fair young wife, could see no flaws in her idol; he was her hero, and all that he did or thought seemed to her so faultless that it was next to impossible for him to relapse into his gloomy fits, or, if he did, she soon dispelled the doubting, torturing moods. Her air of perfect ease, of perfect confidence,

accelerated his recovery in that direction, while her light, gay laughter would have brightened the darkest spot on earth. His nervousness, his excitability, soon entirely left him, and the atmosphere around him seemed to become permeated with a curious satisfaction, a feeling that he had now little left to wish for, that to be with her in that sweet and complete companionship for which he had yearned, was enough.

His consciousness of her always beside him filled him with a delight that seemed absolutely ultimate. Each hour, each minute, that hurried on its way, was a mutual experience drawing them closer and closer together, helping to complete that marvellous understanding which has never ceased growing and perfecting itself now for more than twenty-three years.

They lived a very retired, very quiet existence at first, spending many an evening alone at home reading, chatting, singing old German duets and "*Volkslieder*," or else simply sitting side by side in front of the bright, dancing fire in silent communion, contemplating the fantastic flames, pale rose with dark-red shadows, hissing softly against the scintillant background of consuming wood, enjoying the same pleasantness of environment—such trifles making up the restful "*tout ensemble*" he had been unconsciously needing all along.

And now one would have expected them to spend the remainder of their natural days in thankful tranquillity; but no, Fate holds no such peace, especially where Kings are concerned, and, although they did not know it, their horizon was even then gradually becoming obscured by the portentous clouds of a storm, which, had it not been for the slender, graceful woman ever at his side, her sympathetic eyes bright with encouragement, he would have found much difficulty in withstanding.

In the month of May following their marriage Prince

and Princess William went to Vienna to be present at the wedding of Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria, and the contrast between the bride of two months and the bride that was to be was so marked, so disheartening for those who loved "Rudi," and had his welfare at heart, that it seemed a positive cruelty to the prospective bridegroom to have made it possible for him to compare the happiness of his friend Prince William with the barrenness of feeling his own *fiancée* inspired.

Princess Augusta-Victoria was tall, but Stephanie seemed a good deal taller, thanks to her sinewy, bony leanness—"*Ses coudes sont des aiguilles à tricoter!*" Empress Elizabeth used to say. Her spare figure, spare and angular, held unswervingly to the perpendicular, and looked as if entirely constructed of nothing but bone and tendon. The German Princess's yellow hair curling in delicately soft tendrils gleaming like gold, her pink-and-white camellia-like skin, and her deep-blue eyes, full of laughter at one moment, glowing with sympathy, with affection, with love, at others, ever changeful and fascinating, were delightful to behold, and made, alas! yet more conspicuous the dull, dun complexion, the lustreless tresses bound closely and ungraciously to the unduly elongated head, and the expressionless eyes of the Belgian. The very clothes of the two Royal girls still further emphasized their extreme unlikeness: Augusta-Victoria's exquisitely fitting gowns, simple but "*chic*" in their effect, showing her careful and dainty in every detail; Stephanie's magnificent apparel, somehow or other, in spite of all efforts on the part of maids and "*couturiers*" and of her own love of glitter and display, proclaiming her by the mere way in which she wore it a woman who never gave two thoughts to that delicious "*recherche*" and refinement which

make even a Parisian "*grisette*" appear well dressed in her plain black frock and immaculate "*dessous*."

I remember very distinctly how on one occasion Empress Elizabeth watched these two conversing together; at first vaguely, but by-and-by with a strange, continued absorption, her lovely face assuming gradually an almost austere expression in its sorrowful foreboding. What they were talking about it was impossible to hear across the great drawing-room, but it was perfectly plain that the young wife of the Prussian Heir Presumptive was in one of her gayest and most delightful moods, her hand resting for a moment on Stephanie's pointed shoulder, and again and again gently patting it, her beaming face speaking louder than words.

"You don't know how blissful married life is!" One could not but be certain that that was what she was saying, and it must have been a longish story she had to tell, as well as a gleeful one, but apparently, also, the manner in which it was received was not pleasing, for her face, at first all aglow with pleasure, slowly sobered, darkened, and expressed disapprobation, till finally all animation and trustfulness had vanished from its mobile features.

The watching Empress's beautiful countenance had paled, her magnificent eyes were graver than I had ever seen them, and her glance was heavy with significance as it rested on the group and lingered almost reproachfully upon the long, cold, colorless silhouette of her daughter-in-law that was to be. There were sad and angry things in that look, mingled with pain and almost terror. At last she drew a deep, shuddering breath. "God is angry with the Habsburgs," she murmured. "Ah! my poor Rudi, my poor boy, what a fate!"

Her pupils had widened, as they had a way of doing when she was deeply moved, her voice was hushed to a

whisper. It would have been merciful could an angel have drawn an impenetrable curtain before those eyes so cruelly far-seeing, which read something as awful as God's anger in the union of her beloved son to the woman who was to wreck his life. Surely that moment was unforgettable, and equally unforgettable the weary, dismayed sound of the Empress's voice as she said, half aloud, to herself: "I am sick with pity for Rudi. Why could not he also have found a woman he could have loved and who would have loved him, a woman like that charming girl yonder? This is as bad as suicide!"

It must have been, since it led to it!

There are in the lives of most human beings passing moments or words which leave a deep and lasting impression upon the mental retina, and which hold fast to the very sinews of our souls as if they had caught somewhere in an inner wheel and had persistently clung there ever since. Of this nature was the scene I have just described, for it was instantaneously graven upon my memory, never to leave it from that day forth.

Princess William created a most lastingly delightful impression at the Court of Vienna. She was not one who looked upon her exalted rank as an opportunity to turn her back to the responsibilities of life and to hasten away to a round of perpetual amusement, for, like her husband, she took a vivid interest in the serious and responsible side of a Ruler's existence. She stayed but a short time in the gay Austrian capital on that particular occasion, but, nevertheless, she succeeded in endearing herself to everybody, from the Emperor and Empress downward, old and young alike quickly succumbing to her charm of manner and radiant presence.

Her vocation as the very embodiment of the perfect wife and mother shone already then through her; her

calm, quiet ways, her easily aroused sympathy, swiftly deepening to compassion wherever it was needed, her sensible manner of viewing charitably the reason-defying recklessness of most lives, and the hand she ever readily held out when help was required, were irresistible, and wherever she went there arose a chorus of spontaneous homage and praise.

Many still remember the first "*fête*" given by the young couple at their Palace of Potsdam, and where not only the Court but all the proud German aristocracy appeared.

An accomplished hostess, who had rapidly acquired a meticulous knowledge of all the observances prescribed by rigid "*étiquette*," the young Princess moved among her guests, clad in some light, shimmering fabric, which billowed as she walked, like deliciously tinted clouds, her eyes shining with that love-light which frankly said to all who might care to know:

"I love as much as it is humanly possible to love; I am proud of my lover; I love him with tenderness and with worship, with truthfulness and with wonder, with all I have and with all I am!"

It is astonishing, too, how very becoming legitimate love is—perchance because it is so rare—how it brings out the grace and the purity and the very best of a woman's refreshingly unspoiled soul!

Certain it was that the young Princess was created to tread in the paths of peace where'er she went. Her gentle and sober gestures, her calm, soft speech said as much; nor was she a worrying woman, but one endowed with a strong, cheery heart, which could, if necessary, brave wind, weather, or mishap with unchangeable philosophy; for circumstances alter us less than we think, and if we are of a bright, hopeful temperament, bright and hopeful we shall be through all. If misanthropic

and sullen, no happiness, be it ever so great, no prosperity, be it ever so glorious, can drive these congenital defects away.

This first "*fête*" given by the newly married pair classed the Princess at once as a hostess "*di primo cartello.*" The supper which followed it was irreproachable, and served with an elegance and refinement to which Berlinese were not then accustomed, and, watching her, one might have believed that she had made an especial study of how to live and how to please, whereas she simply was at heart an artist, and, moreover, had been at a good school since her marriage, for the taste of Prince William was extremely fastidious, and even at that early period of his life he was already past-master of "*l'art de bien recevoir.*"

No less did he understand, however, that of living quietly like any ordinary citizen, enjoying to the utmost the pleasures of a harmonious home.

Every morning, soon after sunrise, the Royal lovers walked briskly in the Potsdam park, after a "*tête-à-tête*" breakfast in a cosey room overlooking the gardens. They found an ever-renewed pleasure in the beauty of the summer weather, in the wreaths of "*églantine*" embowering the hedges, and in the clean, vigorous tendrils of the wild convolvulus starred with the delicate pearl and pale pink of its almond-scented blossoms.

Something in that young unfolding of open-air loveliness filled their hearts with exquisite pleasure, for how like all this was to the unfolding of the great tenderness which had brought them together. Like true "*campagnards*" they gazed at the hay standing high in the distant fields, at the deep emerald-hued pastures where sleek cattle grazed peacefully, and they drank in with lips parted by smiles the luxuriant breezes laden with the wholesome perfume of the "*renouveau.*"

Extraordinarily pleasant did the present and the future seem to them when thus alone; yet there was neither vainglory nor selfishness in their delight, for they valued what was to be theirs by right, not for its grandeur, but for the joy and great possibilities which it added to their fate.

In the afternoon, when the Prince returned from the parade-ground, where he had tirelessly and industriously exercised his men, he was in the habit of taking his "*Dornröschen*" for a drive along the flowery country lanes, skirting big ponds and tiny lakelets dotted with swans and water-lilies, which repeated themselves on the clear surface as upon a mirror; and like children they laughed together at the frightened scurrying from their approach of moor-hen and water-fowl into the reed and forget-me-not grown river-edge.

After the evening meal, of which they partook early, while still the elongated sun-rays streamed in through the western windows of the palace and made the crystal and silver table appointments sparkle and scintillate again, they would stroll out arm in arm to watch the pink fleeces of cloud follow the gold and crimson of the sunset to the horizon line, their eyes fixed upon the paling blue of the sky, their happy young faces fanned by the caress of the evening wind as the great, round silver disk of the moon solemnly arose behind the distant dark masses of verdure beyond the park.

Often they lingered and lingered until it grew to be deep dusk beneath the trees and the bright green of the lawns faded to soft, fleecy gray, the smoke of his cigarette mixing with the penetrating odors of reseda and heliotrope which greeted the coming night, completely satisfied with each other and seeking no other pleasures than the simple joy of this peaceful solitude.

Another spring found them just as happy and light-

hearted when alone, and with one blessing greater than all the others filling the immediate future with a sort of awed sense of joyful anticipation.

Again the Palace of Potsdam became bowered in tender green and surrounded by the indescribable scent of the rejuvenated season, again a thousand liquid gems sparkled on the flowers and the velvety turf, while at sunrise the birds trilled among the lilacs and laburnums, hushing into silence the amorous solo of the nightingale which had lasted throughout the short dark hours. On the 6th of May, 1882, while the lightest of breezes ruffled the waters of the Havel, scarcely shattering the mirrored shadows of the trees leaning over it, the Princess's arms closed upon the cause of all this expectancy, hope, and happiness.

Her pride and gratitude were strung to their highest pitch as she gazed from her beautiful boy to the radiant face of his young father, who, with sunshine in his heart and tears of pure delight in his eyes, bent tenderly over her, looking as if he had drunk of some splendor and was visibly giving it out.

Half an hour before, the whole world had seemed to Prince William blackened by fears reared to such a height that they had blotted the very sun from the sky, but now life for him had recaptured all its former brilliancy, with inexpressibly much added unto it by the event of that glorious day.

There was a new lightness and joy about his heart which had not been there before, and when he called out from a window to his grandfather, waiting tremulously on the terrace below, the now historical words, "*Papa, ein Junge!*" (Papa, a boy!) the jubilance of his own voice must have startled him.

This new-found bliss simmered in his mind as he went through his routine military duties on those unforgetta-

ble May days which followed, every now and then a little bubble of exuberance breaking on the surface in a smile of beaming pride which by no means surprised his men.

He was just then in a mood, so he himself remarked, to gallop about the country, taking every ditch and fence as he went, and it was clear that for once in a way he was almost thrown off his balance. He could neither sit, nor stand, nor lie quiet, but every moment went off on aimless excursions to the young mother's room or the spick-and-span brand-new nursery where his son and heir reigned supreme; and when enjoined by the dragooning nurses to walk very softly for fear of awakening His Majesty the Babe, he returned with the same haste to his own quarters, from whence he would presently emerge on some new errand quite as deliciously fussy and aimless as the others had been.

He felt, too, a continual uneasiness—at the back of his mind—for the safety of his two darlings; but, as it all came out, he might have spared himself the pains, for nobody could have been healthier and stronger and brighter than they, and never did a baby a few days old afford his youthful father such cause for perfect satisfaction. His discoveries about the little one were every hour more remarkable, really quite epoch-making, and everybody else was forced to become resigned —that is, all excepting baby's mamma—to count as nothing just then with as good a grace as possible.

Halcyon days those for Princess William, whose hopes and exceeding reward they embodied. She talked but little, as was her wont when she felt anything very deeply, but just went on doing simple little unselfish things in her usual way, sympathizing with her husband's extravagantly high spirits and listening to his irrepressible laugh over the most indifferent trivialities, as to the sweetest music and also a compliment to herself.

Soon she was quite well again and able to accompany her little son in his airings beneath the delicate green foliage of the trees, walking up and down the grassy alleys diapered by the clean, golden sunshine where it filtered through the branches; pulling long pieces of feathery grasses from their sheaths to gently tickle now and again one of the tiny fists—like crumpled rose-leaves —resting on the snowy mantle, or the satiny fat little neck just beneath the lace hood of His Imperial and Royal Highness Prince Frederick-Wilhelm-Victor-Auguste-Ernest of Hohenzollern, her much-beloved first-born.

CHAPTER V

When Princess Augusta-Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg married Prince William of Prussia, she was proclaimed by the Court and by the great world at Berlin to be the most fortunate of girls, since, although virtually dowerless and the daughter of a House no longer regnant, she had secured the finest "*parti*" in Europe.

From the very first this extravagant "*luck*" was dinned into her ears with what may be described as exaggerated persistency and superfluous emphasis; condescension and a lofty sort of patronage being among the mildest means employed to keep perpetually before her eyes the fact that she had been blessed far beyond her deserts.

Indeed, one of the reasons why the young couple kept as much as they could to themselves and avoided, whenever it was possible, appearing at Court, was because hot-headed, warm-hearted Prince William — then little more than a boy—was keenly alive to the unfriendly manner in which his wife's every act and utterance was criticised, and because he found it almost beyond his power to refrain from giving rein to the cruel resentment excited in his heart, by the glaring disposition displayed there to cavil at her demeanor, her dress, nay even at her most charming qualities.

To be sure, the kindly old Emperor and his aged Consort, Empress Augusta, never departed from the affectionate consideration which they made a point of evinc-

ing on every occasion towards their granddaughter-in-law, but they had no opportunity to take up the cudgels in her behalf, since even the most virulent of her detractors studiously avoided saying or doing anything which might attract the attention and arouse the indignation of Their Majesties, and thus furnish a pretext to the Prince for invoking the intervention of his Imperial grandparents.

Thoroughly conscious, however, of the depreciatory atmosphere which prevailed at Court, especially in quarters where the Princess should have found sympathy and support, the young people, too proud to complain, met this difficult situation with dignified silence and ever-increasing reserve; and though Prince Bismarck, for political purposes of his own, attempted to envenom matters still further, and urged Their Royal Highnesses to publicly resent these affronts, his advice remained unheeded.

Indeed, the Princess saw at once that the great Chancellor wished to use her as a weapon in his manœuvres against his own foes, and to inveigle her into a conflict of many years' standing which was a secret to nobody. She therefore wisely determined to keep aloof from his schemes, declined to comply with his desires, and bore the brunt of his extreme displeasure and sarcastic vituperations with a quiet courage and a patience seldom to be met with in the weaker sex, rather than augment by one iota the many worries by which her beloved husband was beset.

For Prince Bismarck the marriage of the Heir Presumptive had had two purposes: one was to reconcile the Schleswig-Holsteiners to their country's incorporation with the Kingdom of Prussia, and the other to make of the young bride—whom he fondly imagined to be very pliable, shy, and easily managed—a scourge

wherewith to whip his personal enemies. In this last project, as I have just said, he did not succeed, and nothing could equal his stupefaction and dismay when he found that this young and unsophisticated girl, brought up in the simplest fashion and quite out of the world, whose acquaintance with Court etiquette, forms, and ceremonies was at first of the scantiest, not only faced him with unfaltering bravery, but gave him to understand, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that she would not lend her hand to his machinations, no matter what humiliations and vexations she might be called upon to endure.

I heard him myself declare, shortly after one of his encounters with her, that for a woman to have brains was a serious blemish, and that he wished from his heart he could forbid them all the use of such dangerous explosives.

"Women should do as they are told," he continued. "Politics should be as uninteresting and unattractive to them as the commotions which take place at the bottom of the sea; they should not even know the names of the rival parties in the Reichstag, but confine their attention to their kitchens and still-rooms, and to the rearing of their children, until they are bidden to use their accursed 'feminine influence' in some good cause, and then only when told how to go about it."

This tirade ended in a storm of denunciation, which I do not propose to transcribe here, and I remember that at the time I sincerely pitied the woman, whatever her rank, who was forced to listen often to such an enunciation of principles.

Still, the Chancellor had certainly a long score of grudges against the Princesses of the House of Hohenzollern, and it is scarcely to be wondered at that his Machiavellian mind should have evolved the plan above

mentioned, or that his favorite motto—"*Petticoats only conduce to the ruin of statecraft*"—should at that period have seemed to him singularly apposite.

His greatest dread was that Princess William should ally herself with the Empress, who was one of the principal opponents of his policy, and he at once took effectual means to keep the two Royal ladies as far apart as possible.

Empress Augusta was and will remain one of the most pathetic and interesting figures of modern history, and the masterful Chancellor did much to embitter the last five-and-twenty years of her life by his savage sarcasms, and the uncompromising animosity that he displayed towards her.

"May she be happy in the great, restless world which she is about to enter!" was Goethe's prayer when he took leave of her, his favorite pupil, on the eve of her departure from Saxe-Weimar for Berlin as a bride.

Alas! the wish was not fulfilled! The Court of Frederick William III. was not the place whither to journey in search of gayety or happiness, and the fair young Princess was ill at ease there always.

With advancing years her health broke down so completely that when her husband ascended the throne, in 1861, she was a confirmed invalid, suffering at times tortures from an internal malady, which she bore with exemplary courage. Her devotion to good works, her boundless charity, her tenderness of heart, were infinite, and even after age and illness had made havoc of her beauty, her winning smile, and the intense look of her magnificently sparkling eyes captivated all those who came in contact with her.

Suffering seemed to have brought out nothing but good in her, and when she became Queen of Prussia she never wearied of ameliorating the lot of her Con-

sort's subjects. She worked harder than any Florence Nightingale for the success of the Geneva Convention and the establishment of the Red Cross Society, and in the wars of the sixties, as well as in that of 1870–71, she personally organized hospitals for the wounded, whom she daily visited, and upon whom she lavished all the comforts and even luxuries which a long purse can afford.

Her sympathies for France were imputed to her in certain quarters as a crime, and yet they were but the outcome of a generous-hearted pity towards a fallen foe. She it was who besought the King to delay the bombardment of Paris, and this solicitude for the wretched women and children, the sick and wounded starving within its walls, Bismarck never forgave her, accusing her openly of placing obstacles in his way, and of endeavoring to weaken his influence with the Monarch to whom he was devoted body and soul.

This cultured, sensitive, and much-misunderstood Queen would have been the best of guides, philosophers, and friends for her grandson's bride, but that the wily Chancellor would not allow! He succeeded in a measure to keep them apart, and during the first few years of her married life Augusta-Victoria was exceedingly lonely.

Her only friend in Berlin, practically speaking, was then the American-born Countess Waldersee, whose first husband, Prince Frederick of Schleswig-Holstein (he had abandoned his royal rank and dignities for the Austrian nobiliary title of Fuerst Nöer in order to be able to marry her) had been Princess William's uncle.

There has been a good deal of nonsense written about Countess Waldersee having been the "*Egeria*" of William II. at the beginning of his reign, but it is those only who know nothing of Germany's present Ruler who are inclined to believe such idle gossip. For he is

emphatically not a man to be led or swayed by any one; least of all has he ever permitted any woman, old or young, beautiful or the reverse, to influence his political conduct or the action of his government.

True, Countess Waldersee is a woman of quite remarkable cleverness, and was in her youth extremely good-looking; moreover, neither Emperor William nor Empress Augusta-Victoria has ever forgotten the affection and motherly tenderness which she displayed towards her sometimes so forlorn young kinswoman, during those first years at Potsdam, and they treat her as a much-valued relative. But her alleged boundless influence over the Heir Presumptive, and subsequently over the Emperor, never existed except in endless and very theatrical press reports, dubbing her "the elderly '*Egeria*' of a hot-headed and immature '*Numa Pompilius*.'"

Any person who knew Prince William in those days will be ready to confess that even then the whole character of his face showed him to be anything but a pliable or weak man. The squareness of his under jaw, the firmness of his lips, the dark-blue gleam of his penetrating eyes, and especially the impressive sternness of his whole expression, when not smiling, all spoke of invincible determination, pride, dignity, and absolute self-possession—nay, his voice alone, "*schnerdig*," abrupt and extraordinarily energetic, convinced even the most dull that this was a Prince destined to leave his impress upon the history of the world.

Matters became still more unpleasant for the Prince and Princess soon after the birth of their first baby, and the forbidding clouds, which had until then emitted but low rumblings of thunder and of storm, gathered with increased menace in their sky, and so sombrely at times as to almost obscure it altogether.

The christening feast itself was not characterized by much geniality, in spite of the efforts made by Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria and Grand Duke Sergius of Russia to lighten the visibly unsocial spirits of most of those present. Emperor William the Great alone beamed with joy as he held the beautiful baby in his old arms before the font, and was in such high spirits that he certainly did not so much as notice the dreary attitude of those surrounding him.

There was, still then, the suggestion of the wild-rose in the face of Princess William, with its delicate, fleeting shades of pink and white, but the slim strength and dignity of her limbs and carriage, the graver expression of her eyes, already betrayed the fact that she was now burdened with heavy cares and was prepared to bear them squarely and uncomplainingly.

She manifestly avoided the common error of expecting too much from the world. For the present, she seemed content with avoiding complications and censure, and she said but little, her attitude being one of kindly and courteous reserve.

At any rate, those who were not her friends soon perceived that there was more in her than they expected to find—which was a distinctly unpleasant surprise. The perfect simplicity and gentleness of her whole attitude seemed to say, much more plainly than words could have done: "I am of no importance; do not misunderstand my position. It is not my business to prevent events or to make history; so, you see, you need not be so bitterly incensed!"

Ah, yes, but there were many who, nevertheless, weighed her importance with extreme nicety and watched her with alarmed attention, for it was plain that she was the spouse "*par excellence*" for her impulsive, enthusiastic husband, a steady helper in need; and though

she strictly confined herself to Prince Bismarck's virtuous programme, and was, above all things, a perfect wife and mother, yet her personality was beginning to loom inconveniently, even upon that distinguished statesman's horizon, as one whose sensible and single-minded advice was more likely to commend itself than his own to Germany's future Emperor.

She was just as sweet-tempered and gracious as of yore, and quite as patient. She never made an ill-natured remark or did an ill-natured thing, but her love for her brilliant husband had become tenfold greater; his will was now hers; her only wish was to ably second him in anything he undertook, to please and satisfy him in every respect, to bend all her energies to his service, and it was plain that should any one ever venture to attack him, stealthily or otherwise, she had it in her to defend him with unflinching courage and resolution. Truly, quiet as she was, she had a character of her own, and plenty of poise and discernment, and to be so guarded at her age and in her position showed a fund of resolution sufficient to give much food for reflection to the great Chancellor.

"Her head will be so much turned as to ruin any sense there may be in it," had been one of the charitable verdicts pronounced at the time of her marriage at the Court of Berlin. Yet no such thing had taken place or was likely to do so.

She continued to abstain from all thoughts of self. Her husband never saw her sweet face without its cheering smile, come when he would; he never heard a complaint, or even a peevish word or an exacting demand upon his overburdened time.

Her power was too womanly—in the highest acceptation of the word—to be ever obtrusive, for she was content to play no rôle at all, but to go about softening,

healing, guarding, stirring up the better feelings of everybody with whom she came in contact, while her rectitude and fairness of judgment proved on more than one occasion an infinite blessing to the man she so passionately loves.

Emperor William has often complained that he is the most misunderstood Monarch in Europe—which is perfectly true; and it may be added with equal veracity that his Consort shares this misrepresentation, as she has shared all his joys and all his sorrows during the past twenty-five years, for it is the fashion, even in Germany, to speak of her as a model wife and mother of the prosaic "*Hausfrau*" type, and nothing more; whereas, in spite of her own modest ways, all kindness and goodness, there is much in her that no one ever suspects excepting her immediate "*entourage*," much that raises her high above even so lofty a standard, and makes her indeed the ideal of a great Ruler's life-companion.

What her husband thinks of her may be gathered from his constant reference to "*meine Frau*"—words to which he gives an expression which eloquently translates the fact that she is above all the rest of the world in his eyes, and that he, at any rate, has never for a single instant been blind to her true value.

The young couple continued to live at Potsdam, moving in the autumn from the "*Marmorpalast*" to the "*Stadtschloss*," and in the spring from the "*Stadtschloss*" to the "*Marmorpalast*," with clock-work regularity, but they always preferred the "*Marmorpalast*," for these two loved nature, and to them the fresh air, blue sky, and green trees were charms sufficient in themselves to enchant.

The flowers, too! What a joy they were to the Princess, when in April and May the lanes and woods

around Potsdam became blue with wild violets and pink with hawthorn. Lightly she would dive between the stems of the hazel and alder bushes in search of harebells, Solomon's-seal, buttercups, streaked sorrel, or delicate wreaths of clematis.

These spring blossoms were suitable companions for her, reminding her, as they did, of her dear old forest-girthed home, and they afforded her many hours of contentment when the Prince — still always to her "*le Prince Charmant*"—was detained longer than usual by his military duties.

All the annoyances and vexations to which she was subjected invariably fled at his approach, and she became once more full of spirit and merriment, gladsome and blithe as a child as soon as his hand touched hers.

He had changed a good deal, both mentally and physically, since his marriage; he looked older than his age now, and his deportment, striking countenance, and half-repelling, half-inviting manner were more effective with strangers than his former absolute reticence, for there was something irresistible in the privilege of attracting the attention of one whose demeanor was in general distant.

When he once began to talk—eager, decided, original, brilliant—he fairly fascinated his auditors; and when he kept silent everybody watched ardently for a renewal of favor.

General homage was, however, no pleasure to him; he accepted it as the due of a Hohenzollern, and would naturally have missed it had it not been laid at his feet, but he never stretched so much as a finger to beckon it to him or to render it more personal.

In 1883, 1884, and 1887 the little Princes Eitel-Frederick, Adalbert, and August were added to the Potsdam nurseries, and to the expression on the young

mother's face a pensive gentleness, almost mournful at times, a slightly care-worn look around the eyes and mouth, even while she smiled; for many anxieties beset her with regard to the disappointments and numerous trials her husband had to bear.

Her first-born was a constant joy and solace to her. He was a remarkably bright child, his delicate features, pure, fair skin, and soft, dark-blue eyes—like his father's—sparkling with intelligence, made up a "*tout ensemble*" of which any mother might well be proud, and the two were almost inseparable during those first six years.

Prince William had on several occasions been forced to undertake official trips to Russia; for instance, in 1885, to bear his Imperial grandfather's congratulations to the Czar upon the coming of age of the Heir-Apparent; and in September, 1886, in order to be present at the grand military manœuvres near Brest-Litovsk. Moreover, it was part of his duties as Heir-Presumptive to visit, in turn, the various German Courts, to appear at the military manœuvres in Germany, and if one adds to this the hunting-parties which he superintended in the aged Emperor's stead, and his own absorbing work as a conscientious and ardent soldier, it will readily be seen why he was obliged to frequently absent himself from his dear home.

Malevolent gossip, it goes without saying, hastened to proclaim that he was "*fatigué de cueillir la marguerite et de filer le parfait-amour*" in his sylvan retreat of Potsdam, and assailed with insidious slander the singularly blameless married life of the man whom Court and people so perversely continued to wilfully misunderstand.

There were many ungenerous references made to the "flightiness" of the Hohenzollern Princes in the press, of every color and nationality, and these malignant in-

nuendoes, first whispered in society but ere long printed in cold type, came to be widely believed both at home and abroad.

It is possible that Prince William might have remained quite indifferent to these calumnies, knowing as he did how completely he could rely upon his wife's trustful love, had not matters been carried to the point of coupling with his the names of certain political "*intrigantes*." This naturally irritated him to the verge of exasperation; and when some of those nearest to him ventured to criticise what they may have believed to have been indiscretions on his part, he, conscious of his innocence and of the injustice of the charges, gave expression to his resentment at their attempt to question or control his private life, pointed out that he was no longer a boy to be chided, but a grown man, and expressed so clearly his indignation that more bad blood was created and the situation rendered yet more strained.

Even the gentle heart of Princess William was at last roused to extreme anger and to a sensation of acute grief, for her ardent affections were fastened upon her husband with a vehemence which her placid and calm demeanor never quite betrayed before others; and when she saw him thus unjustly criticised and accused her suffering was intense, and, judging that amends were due to him for this crying unfairness, she could hardly do enough to prove to him that he was indeed the one object of her adoration.

There is something inexpressibly touching and enviable in such a devotion, in such a power to see no flaw in one's idol, and it is only very pure and lofty beings who can attain to this, the very pinnacle of sublime love.

The Princess had made but little progress in intimacy

with her husband's family, since each day had revealed more plainly to her how much too unimportant she was ever to be one of them.

Chilling in condescending courtesy, they remained gravely and coldly polite, but no more, even when at their best, with the exception of the Emperor and Empress, who were always kindness itself, and had become very fond of her, the old Monarch showing positive paternal solicitude where she was concerned; but this Prince William could not persuade his wife to believe a great compliment to herself, because, according to her invariable custom, she continued to attribute to him everything good that befell her.

The gravest imputation against her was still that she was not "clever," and did not possess the varied accomplishments which so greatly enhanced the fame of the elder Hohenzollern ladies, whose conversation was frequently conducted in such scientific terms that to the ordinary mortal it sounded like an unknown tongue, and suggested to most a lamentable lack of simplicity.

Persons of so much resource and of such abnormally cultivated minds are, of course, admirable, but they sometimes have a weakness for making a target of any one not up to their mark in the "ologies"—a practice which occasionally becomes more mortifying to themselves than to their victims.

Until March, 1887, however, although life went on for Prince and Princess William monotonously, beset with continual small warfares and conflicts that thwarted their best and most generous intentions, it was still so taken up with hard work for both, each in his and her particular realm of usefulness, that they had scarcely opportunity to wish for better times, or to wonder that all real intimacy with most other members of their House should have so strangely remained in abeyance.

Anxious and sad days were, nevertheless, in store for them all, and soon events occurred which in a few short months not only altered the fate of Germany, but changed the entire political plane of Europe.

On March 22d, Emperor William the Great celebrated his ninetieth birthday, surrounded by his entire family. The ceremony was unforgettable in its simple grandeur. The palace presented a very beautiful picture, decorated throughout, as it was, with palms, ferns, and flowers, and filled with a joyous crowd of well-wishers, while the hero of the feast was himself the most amazing and wonderful sight to be encountered there. Healthy, strong, smiling, and happier in his extreme old age than he had ever been in his youth, above all things kind and chivalrous, he preserved a fresh and almost rosy mien quite wonderful to behold.

"You young people have no real stamina," he was fond of saying, with a cheery laugh. "It is the fault of modern training. In my time children were fed on bread and milk and underdone meats, and were never allowed to 'stuff' nor to sleep in heated rooms, the result being that we were never ill, nor knew that we had livers or lungs or digestions—or hearts either, for the matter of that, excepting as a sentimental figure of speech!"

This was heard in somewhat shamefaced silence, for was not this extraordinary nonagenarian a living example of his theories, he who had so evergreen a vitality, so great and unimpaired a sagacity, was so hale and hearty, so unselfish, good-natured, and cheerful, and who, in one word, compared so favorably with the modern fussy, nervous, dyspeptic victims of eternal haste, worry, overfeeding, and other "*fin de siècle*" evils?

This year of 1887 had begun under more clement

auspices for the little family at Potsdam. The four sturdy boys occupying the Princely nurseries gave their parents no cause for anxiety, and their nurses, clad in the picturesque Wendish "*Tracht*" of the Spree-Wald, were one of the sights of the little town nestling on the Havel shore; but in the spring came without any warning one of those sudden changes whereby the destiny of peoples and of individuals is made to rock like a storm-tossed vessel in mid-ocean, and which cause so wide-spread a sensation that total strangers, even when belonging to alien races, are unstrung thereby, and that the remembrance of it lingers with them for years.

The young couple were looking hopefully and eagerly in the face of the future when a brutal and horrible transformation came over it; the smile it had shown flickered away, and it abruptly became almost grotesque in its grimacing distortion, as if their sanguine anticipation had outstayed the welcome its power could give them.

What were then the enmities which had sprung up and thriven like weeds in the inner circle of the House of Hohenzollern? What were mere differences of opinion or even the coldness which had gradually arisen between the older and the younger members thereof, in comparison to the evil that was now overtaking them all with rapid, ghostly strides—this dreadful thing, full of hidden tortures and despair, voiceless and mysterious at first, and suggesting formless terrors? Nothing! For past sorrows and disappointments were to be now swallowed up in a gulf of such stormy blackness that they would appear slight and trivial by contrast.

Mere justice to William II. demands that what really took place in 1887–88, at the Court of Berlin, and what he then underwent, should be stated here, and for the

first time in true colors, since the view taken in America and in England of those events has been the foundation of so cruel a misconception of his character.

I have already given some idea how bitterly Prince William resented, not only the lack of sympathy which had been his portion, but the treatment to which his dear wife had been subjected. Not only was it painfully evident to him at every turn that she would never be granted the position to which her rank and status, as well as her personal sweetness and ceaseless endeavors to please, gave her so full a title, but the unreasonable dislike of which she was the victim increased with the passage of time, instead of diminishing, so that when he thought of this requital of her noble, self-sacrificing devotion to himself and to all those who belonged to him he trembled with suppressed rage.

Indeed, continual fault-finding, often, it is true, expressed merely by looks and contemptuous and pitying attitudes, had done its grievous work, and had fanned into flame the feelings of resentment with which the Prince's soul teemed. Something within him had become detached, aloof, and this something had more and more seemed to be barring the path leading from his own home to that of his childhood, closing the way to all tender feeling, to all real intimacy!

During these years Prince William had been beset with many difficulties and disappointments, and had faced them always courageously; sometimes coldly and patiently; sometimes desperately, recklessly resolving to tear to pieces the veil of half-illusions, so ragged now, alas! which still hung between him and the truth. A sudden impulse often seized him to go down into the innermost recesses of his troubles, and to discover the why and wherefore of all his misery. His natural sensitiveness had frequently set him on the defensive, even

with those obviously his friends, and, as he hated any sort of scene, he had fallen into the habit of avoiding even the mere possibility of one, by cutting certain topics out of the conversation with a sort of angry vehemence which amazed and disquieted his hearers. His way of pronouncing certain names, the bitterness of his accent, led one to believe him inspired by downright hatred, when, of a truth, it was nothing more than sheer exasperation, for there were hours in his life then when he seemed to confront the very void in which the world was spinning.

Such was the state of affairs when he was brutally informed that his father was suffering from cancer of the larynx, which meant, to all intents and purposes, that within a space of months easily computed he himself would become Heir Apparent to the Throne, power, and dignities of a grandfather whose span of years had already far outstretched the limits of human life; and out of the darkness there came to Prince William cries that were as those of helpless, storm-driven creatures being hurled towards terrible abysses—those of his own people, whose frantic hands seemed raised towards him in wild gestures at once of appeal and of rejection.

The pity of it all seized hold upon him; for when placed face to face with this appalling tragedy he realized that he stood between two beings tottering on the edge of the grave, one heavily burdened with honors and with years, the other tortured by one of mankind's most frightful ills, both needing his help, his assistance, his energy, his superb youth, and each utterly unconscious of the good or the evil he could work.

But, first of all, he knew that he had to rescue something of which neither his father nor his grandfather could now retain full mastery, namely, the car of State, the reins of which were falling from the heart-broken

old Emperor's hands, and dragged loosely and perilously upon the ground, threatening to bring about at any moment some catastrophe. But any honest attempt to grasp them meant not only further and yet more cruel misrepresentation, but also an open struggle with Bismarck, who would only make way for him and side with him under certain conditions which it might or might not be possible to accept.

Bismarck had always dreaded the moment when the Crown Prince would ascend the Throne. He knew that Frederick had in advance declared himself in favor of "*constitutional methods without any reserve*," and constitutional methods and parliamentarism were the pet aversion of the Chancellor, who realized that their strict application would render impossible both his policy and his continuance in office.

He, moreover, greatly distrusted the Crown Prince, and not only distrusted, but hated the Crown Prince's most confidential advisers. One of his reasons for this was the close association of Frederick and of those confidential advisers with the ultra-Liberal party in Germany, composed of his (Bismarck's) bitterest opponents; while another was the Crown Prince's intimacy with the English Court, the Chancellor declaring that for more than a hundred years the influence of the British Guelph had been steadily pitted against that of the Prussian Hohenzollern throughout Germany.

Bismarck made no secret of the fact that he regarded Frederick as a sentimental visionary, whose political ideas, picturesque, richly colored, and romantic, were what he described as "empty Utopias"—in one word, he gave it thoroughly to be understood that he did not regard Frederick as likely to prove a safe Emperor for reconstructed Germany.

There can be no doubt that the Crown Prince's asso-

ciation with radicals and their ideals lent some color in the eyes of a very large element of the German people to Bismarck's fears, and it is equally certain that he communicated his gloomy forebodings, with his all-conquering eloquence, both to his Imperial master and to Prince William, drawing them both little by little into what was then regarded as the party opposed to the Heir Apparent; with the result that a growing, though tacit, political estrangement widened every day the distance between the grandfather and grandson on the one side, the Crown Prince and his chosen few on the other.

When, therefore, Prince Bismarck saw his opportunity of eliminating Frederick from every chance of succession to the Crown, he jumped at it almost ferociously.

The Crown Prince, who had been sent to Ems for a "*bad cold with bronchial complications*," had returned in a state of complete depression. He knew that he was suffering from cancer, which meant the crumbling of all his hopes, of all his desires and ambitions; and there were few things which his excited imagination boggled at, things which he was certain would happen to him as a natural consequence of his malady.

He was not only in the mood to comprehend all the horrors of his fate, but, being of an expansive and impressionable temperament, he succumbed to a fit of profound melancholia, induced, perchance, almost as much by regrets for his past years of inaction and exclusion from governmental labors and interests, and the impossibility of his now ever putting his pet schemes into execution, as, strictly speaking, by the disease which was so barbarously clutching him by the throat.

The affection and tender sympathy with which his son received him was at one and the same time a balm and a wound to him, for it confirmed him in the idea

that he was indeed doomed. Knowing that Prince William belonged to a party distinctly opposed to his own; that a wasting invalid like himself could, in the opinion of no sane man, be a proper Ruler for an armed and beleaguered nation like Germany; realizing that he could no longer be a match for the radical agitators whom, in his kindness of heart, he had allowed to swarm about him; unwilling, also, to jeopardize the fortunes of the Empire and of the Dynasty, he suddenly declared to his old father, to his son, and to Prince Bismarck, that he now did not desire to reign, if he chanced to survive his father, and was resigned to renounce his rights of succession to the Throne in favor of Prince William.

This was the opportunity already mentioned, and Bismarck immediately pounced upon it. In spite of the young Prince's eager protestations, the Iron Chancellor at once reduced the Crown Prince's declaration to writing, obtained his signature thereto, and deposited the valuable document in the private Hohenzollern Archives, where it still remains.

It goes without saying that nothing of all this was made public—indeed, hardly a word has to this day been printed about it in Germany, and the secret would never have been revealed at all had it not been for the fact that in a moment of extreme weakness Frederick himself allowed it to escape him. This unfortunate admission was the true beginning of one of the most palpitating dramas ever enacted around a Crown.

So far Bismarck had succeeded almost beyond his hopes, but when he set himself, as he did now, to obtain the sanction and assistance of Prince William in all that he was decided to undertake in order to attain his aim —relying, of course, upon his masterful will and the influence, almost amounting to fascination, which the as-

sociation of a lifetime had made so strong—he reckoned for once entirely without his host.

The blow for the young man had been a terrible one. He realized with torturing suddenness how greatly he had really loved his father all the time that the coldness and indifference fostered by others had reigned between them, all the time it had seemed as if they practically ignored each other, and had wellnigh reached the Rubicon of absolute antagonism.

And now it was all over! In a few weeks, a few months at most, death would have severed, with its cold, clammy, relentless fingers, the bonds which indeed bound father and son together so strongly, leaving no chance for a better understanding between them, no possibility of more affectionate mutual relations.

The thought was an agonizing one, which made the Prince's stern lips quiver and his eyes fill. It was intolerable, and it seemed very strange to him that the world could still revolve peacefully when it bore so heavy a burden of sorrows. Yet his strength soon reasserted itself, and brought him back to calm, rigid determination. His father's life must be saved; he, the son, would sweep every obstacle, every impossibility away; he would take command, dare all, and, come what may, would rescue him from this terrible evil already eating into the tissues of his body and drawing near to the innermost citadel of vitality.

But a circumstance which he had not foreseen broke in, coldly and cruelly, upon his resolve, a circumstance that brought upon him amazement, confusion, and despair, cost him the life which he had struggled to preserve, and, as a superfœtation of evils, laid him bare to the absurd reproach of being unfilial—a reproach publicly levelled at him from henceforth throughout the civilized world.

This circumstance was that, while he had just then no other aim, no other desire than to prolong his father's days and to save him from the slow, torturing, but inevitable death by suffocation to which he was doomed, unless operated upon at once—as the German surgeons called into consultation advised—there were other and less single-minded interests than his at work, fighting, so to speak, over the stricken Crown Prince, and subordinating the medical issues of the case to their own selfish political considerations.

Thus Bismarck favored the operation because he held that it would constitute an admission of the fact that Frederick was really afflicted with cancer, in which event he could hold him to his written renunciation of the Crown. He also believed in the possibility of its leaving the illustrious patient voiceless—an infirmity which, according to certain clauses of the Family Statutes of the Reigning House of Prussia, was sufficient to debar him from the Throne; and even the remote chance, at that moment wellnigh an impossibility—but then Bismarck was no surgeon—of Frederick's dying under the knife, received this provident statesman's consideration.

On the other hand, there were in the opposite camp persons who were convinced that, even if stricken with cancer the Crown Prince was likely to survive his father, and since, by occupying the Throne, were it but for a few months, he would enable them to reach the summit of their ambitions, they were, therefore, opposed tooth and nail to the operation, on account of the above-mentioned opportunities it might afford to the Chancellor to keep Frederick from the Crown. Both parties were unanimous, however, on one point, which was to keep the real state of the Crown Prince a profound secret as long as possible.

Prince William, however, always in the habit of looking truth in the face—to most of us there is nothing more hateful than to follow such a course—refused absolutely to turn his back upon it, or even to gloze it over, judging rightly and justly that in so grave and portentous a matter personal interests had no title to consideration at the cost of a good man's life.

It is well known that William II. has an absolute horror of falsehood and that he crushes liars with an angry vehemence which nothing else can arouse in him (indeed, he has often been heard to say, "I've been hurt by the truth many a time, but not so much as by its contemptible opposite!"), and when he found that a trick was going to be played upon the credulous, his rage and indignation knew no bounds; but his wish to deal fairly and squarely with the situation was naturally at once attributed to the sordid desire of snatching the Throne from the hands of his father—for his grandfather could clearly live but little longer.

Bismarck's plots and counterplots, his plans and counterplans, expounded as was his wont when in dead earnest, by slaying an adverse opinion with one word, or holding it to the glaring light of ridicule, which exposed its meagre, paltry skeleton with singular ferocity, were but an added exasperation to a man who, like Prince William, was for the first time diving deep into the most terrible of human tragedies.

What fiery gleams of anger, what clash as of weapons, there must have been in the interviews between these two powerful personalities who had ceased to understand one another, the one cynical—he who had seen too much to allow himself the luxury of illusions—the other in a most exalted mental condition, impassioned, full of heat, courage, and purity of motive; Bismarck considering everything in life strictly in relation to his

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will and projects, appreciating everything simply as it affected them; Prince William, pouring out his generous soul in a vain effort to convince his interlocutor.

Yes! the situation was certainly acutely dramatic, but some followed it that were yet more painfully so; for this was only the beginning of a time so dark that it was only in flashes that Prince William saw what was to be done, or clearly distinguished the full extent of the task he had before him, and its extraordinary thanklessness—he who had suffered and toiled so incessantly in prevision of this day of his coming into power, now so cruelly near, though he had deemed it so far distant.

It was indeed only the beginning of the bitterest pages of his life.

CHAPTER VI

Bitter waters were indeed surrounding Prince William, and problems confronted him which were to be faced as unflinchingly as a good soldier faces the enemy.

He knew it to be his duty, now that the old Emperor's wonderfully preserved strength had given way beneath the stress of his paternal anguish, to be before him in knowledge, so that if he appealed to him in a Ruler's difficulty, he might be able to help him better than with mere words. But Bismarck was always at the aged Monarch's side, and endorsed the young Prince's excellent counsel only when it happened to coincide with his own.

The Chancellor spoke with the authority and weight of an old and valued adviser who had always followed up his dictates with successes, he presented with a skill born of long experience the inestimable advantages of his projects, and urged the Emperor along a line which the Prince often disapproved; for Bismarck had this much in common with the Crown-Prince's party, that the saving of a life seemed of no moment compared to that greater question of the rival political interests involved.

The aspect of everything had changed. Hitherto, the Prussian Royal House had been held up as a model of patriarchal bliss and perfection; it had been like a sturdy tree growing vigorously and happily, pushing its way to the air and the sun with an almost violent disregard of its neighbors, sufficient unto itself in every respect.

During the last few weeks a wild wind had been blowing upon it from the valley of the shadow of death, had shaken all joy from it, and left it denuded of all beauty in its sinister aspect of surly, suffering barrenness. The sky was heavy with clouds, leaving gashes of blackness and broken patches of hopeless gray, threatening and mysterious, behind them as they rolled ominously along.

The fine, handsome, good-hearted Crown Prince who had presented so heroic an appearance on horseback in all out-of-door pageants, and who had so loved to wrap himself in his General's cloak as in a King's mantle, had suddenly dwindled, as it were, to the figure of a pitiful invalid.

He had grown old and sad and weary, all in a few weeks; his great back curved outward between his thin shoulders, with that pathetic stoop of those who are trying to cheat the keenly searching glance of Pallida Mors. The gray atmosphere of an incurable malady enwrapped him like a shroud; there was something fixed, irreparable, in the languor of his every pose, in the hopelessness of his expression, and the little wrinkles near his eyes, the deeper lines by the nose and mouth, half concealed by the fast-whitening gold of the mustache, spelled despair.

The doom hanging over him had already accentuated his features—his cheek-bones looked more prominent, his eyes more hollow, and beneath them was a faint purple tinge—while he walked already rather feebly, bending forward as if to avoid the future, and his whole aspect was piteous, compressed, and miserably incapable.

To Prince William this spectacle was heart-breaking. Whenever he approached his stricken father, a wave of sorrowful tenderness swept over him, and he longed to put his strong young arm about him, to shield the weak-

ness which was so apparent with his own buoyant strength. But he felt that this would only bring nearer to the wretched man the fulness of his misfortune, and so he followed the safest course, which was to appear indifferent.

Such a repression of strong feeling had the natural result of making him look exceedingly grim, almost angry, and as if actually irritated, whereas he passionately desired to tell him all he felt, how profound and unaltered were his love and sympathy, and what was the extent of his distress, a distress furious almost in its intensity.

To save his father's life was William's one wish—feverish, restless, extreme, bringing him to the verge of losing all self-control, incessant, over-powering; and when the distinguished German surgeons declared again, after another minute examination, that an immediate operation offered the only chance of recovery, the Prince more than ever fixed his gaze upon that one ray of light, that dazzling beam of hope piercing like a spear the dark wretchedness which had engulfed him.

It was then that the most sinister part of the drama to which I have already alluded, and which was to last more than a year, began. It was then that Prince William, terribly, passionately overwrought, and struggling to maintain his self-possession in the face of frightful odds, assumed an authority of manner he had never before displayed.

Those who were near him at that time noticed that all softness, all pliability, had vanished; his looks, the very sound of his voice, became adamantine; for, although he had been suspecting something wrong, yet in the wildest flight of his imagination he never could have brought himself to believe that the resolution of those who for purposes of their own desired that Fred-

erick should reign, "*coûte que coûte*," was such as to banish all scruples from their souls.

The knowledge he gained then was sufficient to unhinge a brain less steady than his. It thrust him into hell, pure and simple, and there were moments when he thought he could no longer stand the strain it put upon him. He advocated his opinions with a burning earnestness which startled his grandfather, and even Bismarck, who also upheld the necessity of an operation, though, as shown in the previous chapter, on entirely different grounds.

From the moment when the secret abdication of Frederick had become known to a very few, these few had determined to oppose this private arrangement by every means that could be devised, and were ready to attempt every conceivable form of resistance. At the period of which I speak, they were casting about here, there, and everywhere for means with which to defeat the now grimly powerful son, who was so tenacious in his life-saving endeavor.

In those days the knife was still looked upon with dread, and the risks of an operation popularly considered as being far more endangering to the patient than the evil for which it was applied, a circumstance of which they made precious good use.

I have held in my hand an enlarged model of the Crown Prince's larynx, as it appeared at the time of the first serious examination. Below the vocal cord from the left side of the organ—or, to be exact, from the left inner surface of the thyroid cartilage, projected a tiny, rounded point, an innocent-looking elevation of the mucous membrane, nothing more.

Operation at such an early stage of a malignant growth is a comparatively easy matter to modern laryngological surgery, and can be done without impair-

ment of the power of speech, consisting essentially in penetrating the cartilages and scraping off the tumor with a sharp-edged instrument known as a Volkmann spoon.

Even at a later stage, when the cartilage beneath the soft tissues is involved, the more serious removal of one-half of the larynx is often successfully performed, and, especially since "the functional results as regards breathing and the preservation of the voice are often satisfactory," this should always be done when the patient's physical condition and the extent of the growth admits of it; for even if a cure does not result, life will be at least greatly prolonged.

Since the Royal patient's general health was, all things considered, excellent, and his physical strength very much above the average, there could be no question as to the advisability of having an operation performed at once. So thought Prince William, so thought the poor old Emperor now too, so thought every sensible and just being, including the great surgical authorities whose advice had been sought; but there were others who would not allow the risk to be taken, who, noticing how greatly the wretched condition of his only son had reacted upon the aged Emperor, and how unlikely it was that the latter's life would be much further prolonged, desired only one thing, and that was that their champion should win—were it by a few lengths only—this ghastly race against death, of which a Crown was to be the prize.

No wonder Prince William was seized with sickening disgust!

Were his efforts to prove useless? Would he ever be able to accomplish that which he had set himself to do? Would he ever see his father out in the air and the sun again, fearlessly facing the light of the open

heavens, a healed man, or would he be compelled to watch him sink slowly into the grave, tortured and breathless, denied even the right of yielding to his agony, since to the last he must remain upright and smiling, as behooves the Heir to a great Throne or the Ruler of a great people.

The thought was maddening, and Prince William must then have cruelly realized the fact that political ambition can create monsters, beings to whom all that is healthy, normal, natural, becomes as naught, and who, like criminals, work in darkness, and flee the truth as if it were a consuming fire.

It was at that moment when the son was thinking of his father's distress, almost as if it had been his own, when he thought of his sufferings as if his own flesh were being tortured, as well as his spirit, that Dr. Morell Mackenzie, London's best known throat specialist, arrived upon the scene, summoned by a secret and urgent messenger.

The British and the Prussians were once more face to face!

Crown Prince Frederick had pledged himself solemnly to relinquish his rights to the Throne "*if*" he proved to be afflicted with a mortal disease—a possibility which his party could not therefore afford to admit.

Even extirpated, a cancer is a cancer, and such accidents as recurrence have been heard of; so there *was no cancer!*

The German surgeons, great and undeniable as was their skill and their fame, were, nevertheless, human, which means liable to err! They had declared that they were dealing with a malignant growth, but their diagnosis was not necessarily infallible! Why not then submit the Royal patient's case to another authority, a foreign one this time, who could not be in

any way influenced by or even interested in German politics?

The late Sir Morell Mackenzie—17 Harley Street, London—was an eminent practitioner; he had made a speciality of diseases of the larynx; he had acquired, not only in England, but all over the Continent, a reputation fully justified by his science, and also by his extraordinarily developed intelligence and depth of thought. He was, moreover, a man of taste, besides a savant; an artist by instinct, as well as a wielder of scalpel or lancet. Attractive in manner, pleasing in conversation, of refined and diplomatic bearing, Sir Morell Mackenzie —17 Harley Street, London—was the man "*par excellence*" to enter palaces gracefully, to approach the bedside of some illustrious invalid with a smile upon his closely shaven lips, which put to flight the mere idea of suffering and of death.

From the top of his shrewd, sleek head to the tips of his exquisitely varnished patent-leather boots, he was perfect, absolutely perfect, and none could question his fitness to live on terms of positive intimacy with Emperors, Kings, and Princesses.

Even his motto "*Lucco Non Uro*" (I give light, I do not burn) was encouraging. "I give light! I do not burn!"—how soothing to the anxious relations crowding around a beloved patient, to know that to this wonderful surgeon there was no such fatal thing as obscurity! How delightful for the patient himself to realize that here was a man who, if he followed his own precepts —which he undoubtedly always did—would refrain from all those violent means so dear to the majority of his "*confrères*"! "I do not burn! nor cut! nor slice! nor hurt in any way, shape, or fashion! My delicate fingers will barely touch Your Royal Highness, will scarcely palpate Your Imperial Majesty, for I take no liberties

with the august bodies entrusted to my care, and I know soothe-words for the bitterest trials!"

So spake for him, Sir Morell Mackenzie's every look and gesture.

Introduced to a conference of German physicians and surgeons, who gave, I fear, but poor attention to the polish of their honest, square-toed boots, and who diffused, perchance, in the palatial atmosphere of the Berlin-Schloss rather a faint reminiscence of iodoform and of musty, ponderous, medical tomes, than of otto of roses and opopanax, Sir Morell's whole dainty soul revolted!

He had been called there as a distinguished colleague, who was to take henceforth the leading part in the management of the Crown Prince's case; they humbly submitted to him their opinion and the proofs thereof, their homely faces glowing the while with interest, their eager eyes, all or almost all, glittering behind serviceable spectacles of the plainest make, their square heads bent forward in respectful attention and all-embracing interest.

He, the Great Man of 17 Harley Street, London, calm and gentle as usual, looked like a being of vastly different mould—surely the ordinary brand of surgeon's clay had not been used in his manufacture—his manner was staid and definite, his slightest action remarkable for its finished deliberation; he drew out his handkerchief or slipped off his supremely well-fitting gloves as if he had previously thought the matter out from all its various points of view, and had decided for all time and eternity how he meant to do it.

Professor von Bergman's intentness on such trifles as cancers really seemed for the moment quite unpardonably out of place, and the Teutonic energy of his colleagues rather oppressive. Indeed, there was a suggestion of "*camaraderie*" looming up in all this, a definite

attempt to draw near, which a man of Sir Morell's immense importance could not dream of encouraging.

The professor—I was told this by an eye-witness—stood with his feet turned in more than usual and looking still full of friendliness, but as if gradually becoming uneasy; another of the surgeons appeared more pugnacious and ready to defend Germany, and her entire medical corps, against any one who dared to attack them, but most especially against that superior person from over the seas who glanced superciliously at him now and again with raised eyebrows, for after each sentence pronounced by Sir Morell he closed his own mouth with a vicious smack, like a man who is attempting to keep his temper in, by wholly artificial means.

It was, indeed, a pleasant consultation, from which the German surgeons emerged, with the agreeable sensation that all the firm and settled facts they had accumulated about their profession since their student days had been tumbled to pieces at one blow, without noise or uproar, but without any regard either for truth or for their feelings. Professor von Bergman looked as if a personal injury had been done to him, and the pugnacious consultant whistled mechanically the tune of "*Die Wacht am Rhein*," interrupting himself every two minutes to mutter through his clinched teeth personal opinions quite beside the question.

Sir Morell, during the greater portion of the debate, that is, when not himself speaking, had looked as utterly detached and uninterested as if listening to people talking an unknown language. When his opponents ceased describing the Crown Prince's symptoms, he turned towards them with the air of a man who has done exactly the right thing in exactly the right manner, and declared in bland, calmly refined accents that he never accepted as true anything which he had not

investigated and proved to his own satisfaction to be true, owing this, he added, smilingly, to the sincerity on which he prided himself beyond anything else.

The German surgeons should have been overwhelmed with confusion by this magnificent speech, and yet they suddenly looked at him with eyes so expressive that he came as near getting disconcerted as he had ever been in his life. No doubt, as he met their gaze, he suddenly realized that these good people of the square-toed extremities and inelegant attire were more clear-sighted and forceful than he had imagined, and that they would not be quite so easily dealt with as he had been led to believe.

All the knowledge about the case he had acquired previously at second-hand surely slipped away from him at this instant as water slips out of a basket, and had it not been for the "*nerve*," which he certainly possessed, he might, perchance, have fled from the pitiableness of it all. Instead of which he daringly assumed, from then on to the bitter end, an urbanely menacing attitude, which he alone could have invented, and which was destined to often defeat their fiercest bluntness.

When the German surgeons grasped the situation and comprehended, later on, the tactics of their delicious opponent, they were filled with a fury which most emphatically must have been forgiven on High, and at once.

Sir Morell, they saw it clearly now, desired to show them how simple and unscientific they were, and to try and make them feel self-conscious in their ignorance. He had laid plans, calmly and deliberately, in the certainty of his own superiority; it was therefore their most sacred duty to shatter those plans, which, they knew, were life-endangering to their illustrious patient, and to utterly rout Sir Morell! They did not, unfortunately, quite understand as yet that they were far less astute

than the Great Man from Harley Street, who, feeling assured of the vigorous support of his allies—the Crown-Prince's party—attacked them from every side before they were prepared for the battle.

Sir Morell, who was very determined—another of his distinctive and superfine qualities—having, as he thought, filled the enemy with confusion in the first engagement, lost no time in endeavoring to persuade at least one German celebrity that he was ready not only to offer, but also to give undeniable proof of his opinion, and so set to work with impressive solemnity and without wasting a moment.

On the day following his arrival in Berlin, and again a couple of weeks later, he submitted to Professor von Virchow for microscopical examination specimens extracted from the patient's throat, and it cannot be gainsaid that this excellent man reported that he discovered nothing to "*excite the suspicion of wider and graver disease than a benign growth.*"

Professor von Bergman felt too hostile, too wronged, to reply at once to this extraordinary statement. His relations with those of the antagonistic clan, with whom he came in contact, were now frigidly polite and as perfunctory as he could make them, but they were soon to discover in him a character of singular dogmatism and pertinacity, and when he became aware that the English Doctor was telling to all whom it might or might not concern that Doctor von Bergman was "*guilty of absolute brutality and of a quite unprofessional roughness of treatment*" with regard to his Imperial patient, hell broke loose in good earnest in the shape of a succession of unhappy scenes and undignified controversies, during the course of which ponderous paving-stones were thrown from one camp into the other, and terrible accusations were exchanged.

Professor von Virchow, standing midway between the two defended positions, received for his share the bruising wind of most of those brutal, ill-directed, and ill-aimed missiles, and when he attempted to vindicate himself by asserting, microscope in hand, that the "specimens" sent to him definitely proved the innocuous character of the Crown Prince's malady, his colleagues did not hesitate to tell him before witnesses that Dr. Mackenzie "*had purposely drawn out with his forceps pieces of the healthy right vocal cord in order to triumphantly sustain his diagnosis, since a man of his capability could not inadvertently mistake one side of the larynx for the other, or confound an inflamed and cancerous growth with perfectly normal tissues.*"

The atmosphere around the unfortunate Crown Prince grew, meanwhile, more and more stormy, and as he wearily turned the last pages of this inexplicable book of life, which he had still found so interesting a few short months before, he sincerely envied the lot of the sorriest beggar in the gutters of his father's capital.

A black melancholy, a languid drowsiness overcame him at times, through which faintly echoed the sound of the battle raging about his miserable fate; his heart ached with longing for the past, for the future—which he had planned out for himself and which now lay in sordid atoms at his feet.

At other times all his faculties became singularly acute, his brain grew alert to think, his heart to feel keenly; his eyes, suddenly glittering as with fever, roved everywhere, observing swiftly everything that passed, darting from one person to the other as if eagerly desirous to read their innermost thoughts, while a dreadful expression of anguish dwelt on his pallid, sharpened features, and his nervously trembling hands clasped and unclasped quite unconsciously, as if he was forcibly hold-

ing himself back from succumbing to some frantic outbreak of passion or of despair.

Those who watched him grew exhausted in mind and body as they gazed at this constant uneasiness and distress, sometimes already aggravated by spells of short and almost convulsive breathing, which added a pang of agony to his torment and during which he stared fixedly at them as if dumbly claiming more sympathy, more help, in his great need!

His party, burning with the desire to remove him from Berlin, and from the reach of those too perspicacious German surgeons who stubbornly held to their opinion that he was suffering from cancer, suddenly conceived the amazing idea of taking as a pretext the celebration of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, where her noble and brilliant son-in-law was certainly entitled and expected to appear.

A sly and exceedingly jocose device, certainly; novel and surprising, if you will, under the circumstances, but which naturally maddened Prince William when he heard of it, since he instantly realized the motives by which it was prompted. His physical and mental horror of the whole damnable plan increased by leaps and bounds; his very imagination began to shrink, as if it longed to escape to some region distant from all those atrocious plots and comedies, in which there was something so dreadfully unnatural — he acknowledged this later himself.

Desperately he pleaded with the Emperor, entreating him to forbid so grewsome a thing—pleaded, stormed, implored, threatened, but Bismarck was always there between them, undermining his influence, paralyzing his efforts, maiming his best arguments by a violent and immoderate espousal of his cause, which left the poor trembling old Monarch absolutely crushed, and rendered

thereby more inclined to hearken to the insidious persuasions of those who spoke of hope and of recovery for his only son.

Of course, there were many only too ready and eager to declare, that Prince William's love of display and ardent desire to everlastingly hold the first place, dictated his conduct in attempting to prevent his father from appearing in the Jubilee procession. "He is afraid of being cast into the shade;" this was the charitable verdict of those always disposed to place an evil construction upon his motives, and since such injustice has nothing particularly soothing about it, it is clear that it did not contribute to make the Prince's attitude either more genial or more hearty.

He was stronger than all of his detractors put together; he fought not for himself but for his father's life. For his sake he had set himself the task of winning this sorely disputed battle. Even if every one else hitherto supporting him should relinquish the struggle, he would continue alone to uphold truth and duty.

His allies despaired? Very well; they did not love as he did, then, that was all! He, the son, would not yield, would not let his father go down thus to the grave. There was a chance, there was a cure; he, unaided, would enforce this one remedy to so grim an evil; he would not leave the disheartened sufferer in other hands any longer; he himself would watch over him, nurse him, comfort him, and finally save him—save him himself, since every one now seemed to abandon him to his wretched fate.

The passion of his determination had become almost unbearable to nerves and heart, a passion strong enough to conquer worlds—and yet he failed!

The turmoil in his soul, of love struggling against despair, the desire to save, combating a sort of frenzy of

anger inspired by his antagonists' despicable methods, his almost inspired eloquence, the manliness of his whole attitude, his audacious fearlessness of the world and its comments, the splendor of his aim, the strangely pure loftiness of his purpose, all were in vain, for since Dr. von Virchow's report had been made known in conjunction with Dr. Mackenzie's, the theory of cancer had been finally done away with, for the time being, at least, and a factitious gladness pervaded every corner of that palace where so abominable a drama was still in progress, lighting upon each face a smile that to the seeing eye was but a mechanical rictus.

The aged Emperor had been persuaded to hope, and he, poor old man, so great and good and kind of heart, did not for a second realize that those who so cleverly induced him to permit his beloved son's departure were casting the dice for that son's doom.

Even the patient himself had now been brought to believe in the falsity of the German surgeon's diagnosis —it is so pleasant to credit the fallibility of those who predict the worst to us—his poor dulled eyes, which had seemed to shrivel in his head, began once more to sparkle with life; a rosy tint crept back into his white face, color to his pale, parched lips. Truly his whole being shone with vivacity, and he displayed something of a child's eagerness to resume a game of play ruthlessly interrupted by some cruel hand.

These tall, blond men, with clear, white skins, blue eyes, and hair and beards the shade of ripening corn, are transformed often by a mere flush of joy and of hope.

Merciful Heavens! were they all mad? thought Prince William. Would not one, excepting those who knew but chose to conceal their knowledge, for motives too ugly to mention again—notice how frayed was the silver-

cord holding this temporarily rejuvenated soul and body together? Would no one realize but himself that false hopes, and false hopes alone, were just then pouring, like some frantic torrent, the last flash of vitality through this emaciated sufferer?

The young Prince had too keen-witted a nature not to know, however, when he was beaten, and when the time for vehement protest was past. The assured and phlegmatic bearing of his father's party struck him as extremely ill-omened. What was the good of attempting to enforce his views any longer? Did he not see how very nearly every one now hung on the "*pronunciamientoes*" of the Great Sir Morell, those soft dictates gracefully worded, which were as sweet milk for babes and with which he seemed to gargle his mouth voluptuously. No! he, Prince William, could do nothing more just then, that was certain! Already his attitude was looked upon with an expression of angry amaze. He, in his distress, even honestly strove to believe that perchance his fears had been unfounded, that perchance it was he who was mistaken, but it was of no avail. He was too clear-sighted to be deceived even for a moment, nor could he succeed in deceiving himself. He found the depth of his utter helplessness, but that was all he found.

Henceforth his father became as a shadow to him, something far away from his own life, clouded already by the grewsome pallor of death; he did not even try to conceal his intense desire to keep away from him—he did not say so, but it was difficult not to see it by his manner, and even the few kindly disposed towards him began to regard his conduct as singularly unfilial.

His enemies, however—and just then they were legion—proclaimed abroad this alleged unfilial behavior, as if it delighted them to have at last found a seeming

ground for their accusations, and asserted triumphantly that he was furious to see his chances of succession recede in the dim distance.

A Rubicon was crossed! From henceforth Prince William was held up to public obloquy as a bad son, a cold, cruel, feelingless being, obsessed by but one wish, one idea—to reign.

The summer had come with its burden of roses and of perfumes. Potsdam slumbered in sunny stillness, the gardens and lawns of the "*Marmorpalast*" laughed in the balmy breeze beneath a wealth of blossoming shrubs and murmuring trees, with the "*Heiligensee*" shimmering silver-blue and soft to the eye in the warm haze of June.

The pretty little plump pink-and-white Princelets, with their shining curls floating behind them, ran gayly about, watched by their courageous, high-hearted mother, who strove to show them always a brow as unclouded as the sky was just then, although her burden of sorrow was almost more than she could bear.

The perennial changes in nature which he had loved to watch, what were they now to Prince William? The early flowers peeping shyly from the brown earth, the first primrose of the year, which he and his young wife had searched for with laughing emulation; nay, even the joyful voices of his children—to him, hitherto, the sweetest of music—what were they now to this embittered and cruelly wronged man?

There was no time in his over-burdened,over-wrought life just then to meditate over the birth of a snow-drop, or the radiance of his little ones. He found opportunity to go through all his routine duties as a soldier, to accomplish all the constantly accumulating tasks which his grandfather's increasing age and fatigue laid upon him; but whatever he did was done with a sort of

dogged resolution, that left no room for smiles or recreation.

The crumbling of his great saving-work, the triumph of the persistent and criminal deception, which was being put before the world, the savage blows struck repeatedly upon his heart and which had seared and seamed it like vitriol, had told upon him more than any one save his faithful, devoted wife could divine. The fineness of his soul, his punctilious sense of honor, revolted against the moral blindness of those who persecuted him and had condemned his father to a slow, torturing death. He understood the full horror of the situation, but their conduct seemed, the more he brooded over it, opposed to nature; to him it was conceivable that one human being should wrong another, that jealousies should arise which might lead to open murders, to desertions, to betrayals; he knew the world and its ways too well to be surprised at much, but he recoiled at what was taking place around his stricken father.

How could human beings descend to such depths? He did not know! And when his thought wandered towards his father, now being prepared and braced to perform his part in one of the greatest pageants the world has witnessed, his feelings could find no expression fitting so inhuman a deed.

"*Il régnera*" seems to have been the catchword of the Crown Prince's "valiant" party at that period.

On June 14, 1887, the man who so shortly afterwards was to be called by the English-speaking public "Frederick the Noble," arrived in England, where he had always been extraordinarily popular. In addition to the charm of his good looks, there was added that sense so dear to humanity that he would become one of the most prominent Sovereigns of his time, and in the deepest depth of many an English statesman's brain was

the hope that when that day came they would find in him a valuable ally, since his fondness for Great Britain was well known, as well as his causes of friendliness towards that mighty Realm.

Also, there was not in Frederick the spirit of criticism, founded on knowledge, for which his son was already then dreaded. He never discussed practical matters in a dry, practical manner, asked awkward questions, nor pointed out simply but quite convincingly the absurdity of the answers or of the awkward silences that frequently followed, as Prince William had been known to do, shaking thereby the immemorial calm of many a weighty conscience.

Frederick was, moreover, a striking-looking man, at whom all gazed with admiration, remarking in awed whispers upon the beauty of that grand, golden-bearded rider and the beauty of his horses. Even had he belonged to a far humbler grade, he was one of those personalities whom it is quite unnecessary to point out, for he was far too visible to the outward eye for that. He was, indeed, so large and so handsome that one could not have failed to observe him had he swept a crossing, and, as it was, he created a sensation wherever he went.

Those who watched him closely after his arrival in London however, felt as if they had never seen him clearly before, for in the searching illumination of those summer days—there are sometimes brilliant summer days even in London—in the naked light of noon especially, his skin seemed dry and stretched, his eyes fainter in color, with the fires in them partly extinguished, like the flame of a lamp shining through ground glass.

His moods, too, altered rapidly and inexplicably. Sometimes he appeared dull, weary, almost sleepy and unwilling to speak or move, glancing aimlessly about

him as if thinking of something other than present matters; then suddenly roused to startling gayety and bright talkativeness, full of spirits and merriment, and speaking of the future as if he saw it draped in the rosiest hues.

These strangely rapid changes aroused deep astonishment and anxiety, but when on the day of the great procession he was seen mounted on a magnificent charger, wearing his glittering uniform, and looking the typical hero, with the slight shade thrown by his splendid helmet emphasizing the brightness of his finely modelled face and the gleam of his blue eyes, a murmur of exultation ran through the throng of Royalties hemming him in on all sides, and the gloomy prophesies of the unnatural son were commented upon with a candor which did not exclude ferocity.

Ferocious in its almost freezing disdain was also the way in which Prince William was treated in England during those festive days. Over and over again he must have been tempted to abandon everything, to go straight back to Berlin, and to cut himself, once and for all, adrift from all the horrors of his father's life, as it was then; but pride, duty, and that "*je ne sais quoi*" which make up strong characters, forbade his giving up, and calmly, silently, sombrely, but without wincing, he bore the direct or indirect attacks and slights to which he was subjected, his cold, contemptuous appearance steadily and unfalteringly covering the raging fire within.

That expression of power, that dominant poise, that autocratic glance which so greatly disturbed and angered those who did not know what steamed and flamed beneath, were of course brought up against him as the culminating point of his many sins.

Ah, fools! blind, foolish, easily cozened humanity!

In what a sea of illusions we mortals love to flounder. What a singular lack of continuity and concentration we display in our beliefs, and how strangely we persist in draping the grimmest realities with our own paltry fancies and interpretations, when it suits us to do so.

Did not one heart in that splendid crowd beat with pity at the heroism displayed by the wretched Crown Prince, who was straining every nerve of his body, every fibre of his soul, to maintain the farce of his alleged healthfulness; who was fighting with all the furies of physical weakness, of ghastly apprehension, of mental anguish and of extreme suffering while he made his big war-horse curvet gracefully beneath him, and smiled the cheerful, pleasing smile of a man strong in body and in mind, who looks confidently ahead to a long succession of blissful days woven with silk and gold?

What an endless throng of painful ideas, good intentions, broken hopes, wild, fragmentary ghosts of all hues and shapes, filled his mind as his charger pranced and tossed its lovely, well-shaped head on that glorious June day, while its rider gave rein to his imagination! But gradually, as the hours wore on, his face became gray and tormented, and when any one looked at him he turned away his eyes, shunning scrutiny, as if he suddenly felt how rapidly the card-house erected by his party around him was tumbling to pieces.

Poor Crown Prince Frederick! The shapeless mental ghosts that had floated around him on that never-to-be-forgotten occasion began from then on to take form, to emerge from the void in order to accompany him throughout his subsequent weary and miserable wanderings. They swarmed thickly to his side during the three months he spent at Norwood, they followed him to Scotland and to the lovely shores of the Isle of Wight. Aye! they did not give him a minute's respite when he

tried what the delightful climate of Tyrol could do for this obstinate "*bad cold with bronchial complications*," which Sir Morell Mackenzie was so ably curing; and the ghostly shapes—ghosts no longer, but horrible, grimacing realities now—settled down with him for good and all in the winter home finally selected for him at San Remo.

The green silence of the summer flowed away from Northern Europe, and with it the Royal patient journeyed to the far-off gardens of the sun, flying from the cold and the snow, and from the sharp sense and the sharp knives of the German surgeons he had been taught to dread; far from hope, too, and farther yet from the last chances of recovery.

He was but the ghost of his former self when he reached the pretty little Italian "*health resort*"—what an irony in that denomination — which amid its encircling olive-covered hills is so merrily bowered in bouquets of gigantic palms and millions upon millions of flowers.

The beauty of this place was perhaps more oppressive to him in his despairing state of mind than had it possessed less color and less fragrance; the teeming life of the South seemed to jeer at his misery; the jumbled scenes produced by ailing men, women, and children, who, like him, had come to winter there; by the chattering, laughing, singing, vituperative natives in their gaudy costumes, beguiling in shrill, voluble accents the visitors to purchase fruits and flowers, or to take a donkey ride, made him dizzy and confused, and symptoms of such gravity manifested themselves at once that Sir Morell Mackenzie was summoned post-haste from his luxurious Harley Street mansion.

San Remo! That delicious, pocket-paradise, that garden full of palms, feathery eucalyptus-trees, oranges,

lemons, and drooping vines, among which little brown lizards, immensely Italian in their beady-eyed restlessness, scurry towards the golden sands of the eternally blue Ligurian Sea, or rustle beneath gorgeous blooms, velvety and glowing like priceless Oriental stuffs! What a place for a man to watch life ebb slowly away from him!

Sir Morell, as I have already said, was very clever, shrewd, too, with a shrewdness that is opposed to the blunter virtues of the simple of mind, and which urges its possessor to become somewhat regardless of consequences, to trust to a hitherto triumphant luck, and to disregard, with the same noble sweep of decision, vague intuitions about the appalling turn which things may take after all, even when great celebrities have prophesied to the contrary.

The frantic message from San Remo cannot have been precisely to him a bolt from the blue, and yet his amazing attitude of dolorous surprise when he arrived with the magical promptness secured by much gold, the expression of bitter resentment towards a Providence which for once had forborne to uphold his dictates, were masterpieces of achieved perfection. Trouble, however, did not whip up his intellect, and his well-known power to hearten his most desponding patients did not attain on that occasion quite its customary efficiency, for he allowed his anxiety to leak out, and the one enemy within the walls communicated promptly with Berlin.

When the disastrous news reached the poor old Emperor his distress was pitiful to behold. To him this turn towards the worse was a fearful shock, and there was nothing assumed or theatrical in the bitter tears shed by *those* weary eyes.

Prince William, who was with him at the time, rebelled violently at being requested to start at once for

San Remo. His heart was hot within him, for the raging fire kindled a few months before had had neither time nor occasion to die down in this short interval. He had been accused of exaggeration even by those who had then sided with him; was he now to go in person and report upon the accuracy of what he had predicted?

With his habitual mental swiftness he grasped the difficulties of his position, remembered the cruel injustice displayed towards him by his father's party, and which still jangled about him like chains. He realized that if once more he set his foot in that nest of ghastly intrigues, he would act again exactly as he had done before, and that if he was pushed too far, much would happen which he would like to avoid. He loathed being forced to adopt the rôle of controller as much as he recoiled at that of consoler. His whole nature revolted against it, but when he looked at the weeping old man who implored him to go—to go at once—something stronger than his own personal feelings and distastes, something stronger even than his indomitable pride, stepped in, and he could not resist it. There was no one save himself whom the Emperor could trust; this was why he could not fail him, and so he yielded—under the compulsion most impossible of all to withstand, that of a being weaker than one's self—yielded and went.

CHAPTER VII

The air was full of cold dampness, that seemed positively charged with sorrow and anxiety, when the Prince left Berlin. The weather had been very dreary, and now rain fell steadily and dismally from a low, brooding sky covered with leaden clouds, which gave one the impression of anticipating a calamity, and as he steamed out of his future capital, William saw a landscape blurred by Heaven's heavily falling tears, while upon the glistening panes of his private car great drops, discolored by the soot always hanging around big cities, glided in disfiguring spots.

It takes more courage sometimes to rise above the depressing influences of such villanous atmospherical conditions than is needed to face the cannons of a battlefield, and I have always thought that this sombre departure, under such trying circumstances, and so simply accepted in the way of duty, was to be counted among William II's. most praiseworthy deeds; but even the dire and dreary bleakness of the countries he first traversed was less depressing than the wretched wrangle, the fevered atmosphere, and the infinite miseries which he was to encounter upon his arrival in San Remo, at the pretty Villa Zirio.

It was cruel to force him to go there, and he knew it, but the blow was dealt by the feeble, loving hand of a very, very old man, unconscious in his grief and maddening fears of the true state of affairs; and so he, who was young and strong, submitted his will, suppressed

his increasing horror, and travelled as swiftly as could be achieved, to find, as he had feared, the mark of death stamped ineradicably upon his father's face.

Had he been greeted by sorrowful people, who, having lost all hope, had lost also all arrogance, he might yet have relented; but Sir Morell had by now reconquered all his far-famed "*nerve*," and in consequence, to the Prince's boundless indignation, he heard the English "*entourage*" of the dying man still talk cheerfully of the future, and declare that the disease was "*not*" cancer, while in his own reception there was more than a hint of how useless and ill-advised his precipitation in coming had been.

The German doctors in attendance—more for form than usefulness, more to throw a sop to the "*Fatherland*" than because they were meant to be consulted—almost wept as they told him how completely they had been crowded out, and how absolutely the Prophet from Harley Street had ground them under his supercilious heel. Prince William saw for himself how this newly made Knight—I should have said sooner that his title was conferred upon him in recognition of his really magical success in reviving the Crown Prince sufficiently to admit of his appearance at the Jubilee, but custom is a law, and Dr. Mackenzie is so celebrated as "*Sir Morell*" that I intentionally used this higher-sounding appellation from the first — confided his views of the case to every journalist happening to desire them, how he tirelessly charged the German surgeons with having mishandled and aggravated the case, and how well-founded their bitterness was towards him, and he, Prince William, felt as if he was positively touching the very depth of human cruelty and human injustice.

I am not writing a novel, nor one of those honeyed panegyrics which Sovereigns are accustomed to have

grandiloquently thrown at their feet, but merely the truth, supported by many written and printed documents, the truth that has been hitherto sadly neglected regarding Prince William's real position at that time. and if, therefore, it wounds certain sensibilities, deplore it as I may, I must accept the consequence thereof, conscious only of the necessity of opening the eyes of the English-speaking peoples to a great and unpardonable wrong.

The civilized world has clung stubbornly to the belief that Prince William was unfilial and cruel; his attitude towards his stricken father has seemed flatly inexplicable, and to-day the very first remark which follows any praise given to William II. is: "Ah! but remember how ill he behaved towards his poor dying father!"

The time has therefore arrived, and more than arrived, to say something about the terrible experiences which he was called upon to undergo, the conflicts which tore at his very heart-strings, and in order to relieve the public eye of so persistent a leucoma, sharp and sure instruments are requisite.

True, these conflicts, these bitter trials, and all their attendant sufferings have gone to the making of the man who is to-day German Emperor; it was his baptism of fire, the crisis which finally placed him in possession of himself. He very likely did not analyze all this then, perchance even now he is too active and too over-burdened to analyze it all, but as the athlete at the end of a long course of training feels the strength of his muscles, Prince William, when he ascended the Throne, must have mentally realized the iron thews which his soul had acquired during those long months of stress, and must almost have been tempted to say approvingly to himself, "This is I!"

As he looked at his father's white, weary face and

hollow eyes, at the great form now so pitifully languid and emaciated, lying on the big sofa of the pretty drawing-room at the Villa Zirio, anger flowed fiercely below his calm, cold, stern exterior, and the poor sufferer, surrounded by flowers, books, music, pretty "*bric-à-brac*," and all that feminine taste and feminine care could achieve to brighten a little the scene of his miseries, gazed longingly and vainly at him, searching for a flash of sympathy or of softness upon those set, inflexible features, or a break in the hard, almost harsh voice. How could he divine that the breaking-point was well-nigh reached, that this "*unfilial*" son, for fear of not being able to recapture himself, should he ever so slightly give rein to his feelings, was reduced to the necessity of escaping at the first opportunity from the sick-room and the presence of those who were always posted about his father, so that he should have no chance of speaking to him alone.

Of course only those who knew him well could have guessed that there were pulses beating in his temples and in his eyelids, and a dull thudding against his side, which might at any minute force him to betray his overwhelming agitation. But those who knew him well were apparently extraordinarily unobserving just then, since the legend of his unfilial behavior was allowed to germinate and to develop with the phenomenal vigor and opulence of the upas-tree.

The winter of 1887–88 went forward on its course, the bitter wrangle, the boundless rancor and recklessness of mutual accusation between the two more and more envenomed camps, went forward also, and the public—thanks to the cordon of newspaper correspondents constantly and tirelessly engirdling the Villa Zirio—began to take part in the contest from a distance.

Astounding as it may now appear, it was quite usual

to read in the newspapers, one day that the German surgeons were trying to oust the British medical men in order to murder the Crown Prince at their leisure, while at other times these same excellently informed journals insisted upon it that Mackenzie was deceiving the German public, and had subjected his luckless patient to the most ghastly mutilations in order to conceal the existence of the cancer.

The basest motives were ascribed by one faction to the other in and out of print; the public jeered, hooted, and cursed, vituperating and ridiculing in turn, adopting one or the other theory as inclination dictated, and, though the more thoughtful and sensible shrugged their shoulders at such wild accusations, during all this time pandemonium reigned supreme wherever Crown Prince Frederick's deplorable condition and situation were mentioned.

In the winter of that year there was very bad weather in Northern Europe; snow, sleet, and storm delayed railway-trains, and transformed even the fair plains of France and of Southern Germany into trackless white stretches resembling the Russian Steppes.

Several times, nevertheless, Prince William made the voyage between Berlin and San Remo, leaving the former city behind a snorting, hissing engine that noisily flung steam and fire into the congealed air, moving with a jerking, dragging sound over the frozen snow across the bleak, blank face of the land, where now and again a clump of trees, denuded and shivering, showed black against an uncompromisingly steely sky.

"*Unfilial son!*" Neither wind nor weather, drifting snow wreaths nor sombre skies, deterred him from going in person to see his so "*sorely neglected father*"; and as month followed month, it became apparent that sorrowful sights were to meet him at both ends of his la-

borious journeys, since the dear old Emperor's long-protracted life was swiftly drawing to a close.

March came, obliterating the Northern world in its shimmering shroud of snow and ice. The church-towers and square-shouldered houses of Berlin were blurred and blotted by dense fogs, which resolved themselves into opaque and begrimed icicles, creaking and groaning on every roof, and in the great Royal palace the Great Emperor lay on his death-bed.

In attendance upon him was Prince William, to whom he spoke now as if he were his immediate heir, for the flight of his last illusions concerning his son's fallacious hopes had preceded but by a few days his own final break-down.

In spite of all that he had lately undergone, the young Prince did not seem physically tired, but he had evidently lost much of his elasticity of movement, his eyes had a far-away, strained look in their dark-blue depths, and he had grown very silent. Almost mutely he listened to the dying old man's injunctions of State and intimate policy, muttered in the feeble drone of a being whose brain-power has survived his strength.

The cold, almost aggressive pride which had enveloped the grandson like some jointless armor at San Remo, had given way to boundless tenderness and deference; he was evidently enduring now in its full weight the double load of regret and pain which the simultaneous ebbing away of these two lives—those of father and grandfather—had laid upon his heart, for his smallest action betrayed personal feeling of a very acute kind. Every minute of those grim days was like a knife thrust ruthlessly into his sensitive nerves, and the anticipation of the shock of what was so soon to take place left his soul more numbed than all the mists and the snows of that fearful winter could have left his body.

He never once "*gave himself away*," however, but buried in his own breast all the impulses and emotions which could agitate the old Emperor, to whom he gave no sign of his growing anxiety, save by an unusual softness of manner, which, indeed, was startling in this singularly undemonstrative man.

From his wife he received the greatest possible assistance in his self-imposed task of nurse, for she was devotion itself in attendance upon her grandfather-in-law—watched by him night and day, and surrounded him with that exquisitely gentle atmosphere that seemed even more peculiarly her own, now that pity, sorrow, compassion, regret, and many other tender emotions moved her.

Physicians came and went continually, but, alas! there was nothing to be done. The human envelope was worn out, its delicate and intricate mechanism rebelled, grew hourly feebler, and must at any moment give way altogether.

Tears constantly welled up in the Emperor's kindly old eyes at the thought of the cruel tragedy still being enacted in San Remo.

"Poor Fritz! Poor Fritz!" was the eternal, low refrain he mumbled as if he could see his dear son writhing in his agony; then, from time to time, the mind wandered a little, and disconnected sentences about his boy's goodness and virtues and attainments were repeated over and over again. Sometimes, also, he would raise himself in bed, with the help of William's arm, and counsel him about affairs of State in a clear, lucid fashion, which was astonishing, considering the age, weakness, and sufferings of this heroic patient.

At last the end came, the Emperor's thin, trembling hands moved feebly in benediction above his beloved grandson's bowed head, and then very quietly,

like an angel that takes wing, his chivalrous soul left him.

When Prince William closed his grandfather's eyes a great weight of unending grief sank upon his life. He was the more unhappy because this good and just old man had been wellnigh his only friend, and he knew that anger and offence were awaiting him outside that peaceful death-chamber. Misunderstandings born of doubt, temper, and suspicion had marred most of his young life; continually he had been accused of being too arrogant, too harsh, too confident in himself, and though he knew that he had always been perfectly sincere and that the popular conception of his character and of his motives was wholly wrong, utterly mistaken, that his truth and his loyalty had been above blame, yet fine temperaments like his are always cruelly open to self-reproach, and he determined to exercise more patience, more forbearance, more indulgence, and more submissiveness in that near future which loomed so darkly and threateningly over him. Indeed, had there been less intolerance and antagonism displayed towards him then, it is certain that much which happened ultimately could have been avoided, or at least softened. But, alas! fate decided differently, and Prince William was made as unhappy as it is possible for a man to be who has no crime on his conscience, and has all his personal wants richly supplied.

William the Great died on March 9, 1888, and on March 11th Frederick arrived at Berlin in a special train, that had accomplished the swiftest trip on record in spite of the ghastly assaults of a regular "*tourmente*," encountered like some ill-omened and supreme "*détraquement*" of the elements, on the very threshold of his Empire.

When the new Emperor alighted from his saloon-

carriage, there was nothing triumphant in his bearing.

"Poor Fritz! Poor Fritz!" his father had murmured, when dying, and this expression of deep, desolate pity was justified indeed by one glance at the pallid features and almost tottering form of that wretched and supremely miserable man, who gave the impression of an unhappy being led to execution, far rather than of a Prince about to ascend the gilded steps of a Throne.

His party, on the other hand, offered a glaring contrast to their unfortunate leader, whose evident state of trepidation, anxiety, and pained bewilderment robbed him of all sense or even appearance of a leadership he had in reality never exercised. They—his party—rejoiced openly. Was not Frederick, Emperor—had he not won that terrible handicap with death, in spite of the extraordinary weight of lead laid upon him by a malady which knows no relenting? *Their* faces were not gloomy or pale on that freezing March evening, bleak and desolate. They had a vague resemblance to a flock of rooks settling down on a field newly ploughed and rich in fattening food, and all with equal and unceremonious readiness affected to ignore Prince William —as much, of course, as etiquette allowed.

The Prince was very calm, very white, very still; the warmer current which had sprung up in his heart, softened by his grandfather's death, was once more congealed to harder ice by their indecently exultant attitude.

The fact that he, too, had risen in rank and status, that *he* was now Crown Prince, was also ignored like some trifling incident that can be attended to at leisure, or, if possible, altogether disregarded. In school-boy language, it looked as if the general opinion was that this sullen youth needed being "taken down a peg or two"—to be sure, Prince William was not a person

whom it would be easy to take down either one peg or many, but that for the present did not matter.

It is curious what "*parti-pris*" and rancor will work even in people possessed of much natural intelligence, strength, and talent, who can on occasion be good-natured, and yet who choose to show themselves horribly cruel when they fancy, at the turning of a card, that they have won the day!

Wounded pride and mute disgust made the energetic face of the new Crown Prince look extraordinarily grim, it is true. He knew now that gentleness would not answer, and the slight frown which never faded from his brows was a covert rebuke, which could not be quite overlooked; indeed, his antagonists did not at all like the steady, contemptuous gaze of those stern, tranquil eyes, that, as day followed day, became more and more disconcerting to them.

So cold, so grave, so visibly disapproving, this Crown Prince was really insufferable to them, and but for the very real fear which he was beginning to awaken in their breasts they would have expressed to him their feelings in unequivocal terms. The persistent silence he kept was disquieting, too; they did not divine that he held his lips so obstinately shut because he feared every moment that some stinging and irreparable word would escape him, because, also, he had now grown accustomed to resent helplessly, censure mutely, despise unavailingly, and suffer secretly.

The plans, political and otherwise, that were buzzed in his ears continually, sounded to him like some derisive, empty mockery of his father's pitiable condition —that wretched man whose nerves winced, whose heart ached, whose body felt such excruciating pain, and whose fond soul was starving for the word of love that he, his own son, could not by any effort summon to his lips.

The on-lookers, in their ignorance of the manifold wheels within wheels, which make up a temperament and character like those of Prince William, became more and more convinced that he was showing a really indecent lack of feeling; those who affected to be informed of what took place during the protracted conferences between Emperor Frederick, his son, and Prince Bismarck at that Schloss of Charlottenburg, which had been so hastily prepared for the reception of the invalid, waxed eloquent in their denunciations of his (William's) callous and shameless haste to snatch the reins of power from his father's shaking hands. Others, coming straight from the new Emperor's sick-room, actually alleged that the new Crown Prince was demanding the immediate establishment of a Regency—unsupported, unproved, foolish statements that should, like some abject, anonymous letter, have been consigned to the flames of oblivion, but which the world in its kindly charity picked up and magnified and set up on high "*poteaux indicateurs*," so that they could be read and assimilated by all passers-by.

Bismarck had pledged himself by a solemn promise to the dying Emperor William I. to remain in office "*upon any and all terms short of peremptory dismissal*," throughout the necessarily brief reign of Emperor Frederick; and this man of iron was a terrible thorn in the side of the "*Friedrichers*," but it was quite impossible to attempt getting rid of this stiff, intensely disagreeable, and pre-eminently virtuous statesman, who, when he said a thing, meant it literally, and who, when he decided that a thing had to be done, managed almost always to carry through his project.

No, there were many thorns in the roses and laurels snatched from the grave by Emperor Frederick's party! To be sure, Prince Bismarck had a hard time of it just

then himself, and even his unequalled coolness and shrewd "*savoir-faire*" were often shaken with disquietude; but the history of those pitiful ninety-nine days during which a man suffering a hundred varieties of agonizing torture in every hour of the twenty-four sat on the German Throne, need not detain us long, for they would only read like an exaggerated nightmare.

The stolid self-assurance and self-admiration of the "*Friedrichers*" was, nevertheless, beginning to melt before the grewsome and rapid approach of death; they were commencing—some of them, at least—to be intensely frightened, as if they dreaded to be soon transfixed by some of the barbed arrows they themselves had thrown with so much "*doigté.*" The unfortunate Emperor could not be expected to live much longer, and now looked forward to death as a deliverance from infinite torture. The knife, applied too late, had robbed him of his voice, of his power of swallowing, almost of that of breathing; every gasping effort to obtain air covered his livid face with the clammy beads of an icy perspiration, and caused a little, hacking, funereal cough which very dangerously tried the slender amount of vitality he still possessed.

It was, however, terrible to die, terrible, just when he had attained the aim of his whole life, and could at last do what he liked, and in spite of the release from pain, which he anticipated so longingly, sad and useless regrets still bore him untiring company.

At night he would lie with closed eyes and to all outward semblance unconscious and indifferent to all worldly things, his worn-out strength barely sufficient to draw out from his mutilated throat a few desperate breaths, his once handsome face looking ghastly in its waxen emaciation, his tall form very straight, very like an effigy carven in stone, save for the pitiful heaving of

the chest beneath the mere sheet covering it, during these first hot nights of the late spring.

Unconscious of all worldly things he may have been in appearance, but those who watched through the long, dark hours, knew well that the poor sufferer's profound depression and muteness were not due to any unconsciousness of what was taking place around him, that the bitter mockery of his vain efforts to be a King at last—at last—was present every second to his mind, and lay like an iron band around his heart.

To have hoped so long for so much, and to find this! What an abominable irony!

During the day he forced himself to give all his attention to his duties as a Ruler; he received in audience all his Ministers, and that with a regularity and a punctiliousness which aroused the admiration and wonder of everybody; signed State papers and documents unmurmuringly, and attended scrupulously to the routine work of his lofty office; but he felt with cruel distinctness that it was too late now for him to give a thought to all the reforms he had planned, and during his short reign he, indeed, accomplished but one, namely, the expulsion of von Puttkamer from the Ministry of the Interior. This was a triumph for the "*Friedrichers*" over Bismarck, for von Puttkamer had been in office since 1881, and was a loyal Bismarckian and the terror of Prussian Liberalism. The Minister himself had known that he was doomed from the moment when Frederick had inherited the Crown, since he had never made a secret of the fact that in his opinion the reign of this new Emperor would prove the political ruin of Germany, and in his ministerial oration announcing William the Great's death he had pointedly avoided mentioning his successor's name.

On the evening of this defeat Bismarck gave a splen-

did dinner in the fallen Minister's honor, a rather useless and cruel affront to Frederick, since the latter, who, in the first days of June, had been conveyed by boat to Potsdam, wishing to die in his dear "*Neues Palais*," was now so far gone that he could no longer eat, and was not informed of banquets given either with a view of pleasing or of displeasing him.

"Poor Fritz! poor Fritz!" Well might the dying father have said this of the dying son, poor and miserable and wretched beyond the power of any pen to describe, with his bluish lips moving in a vain effort to speak, and his shaking fingers continually busy with the little squares of paper upon which he pencilled his ever-restless thoughts, knowing, as he did, that he had not much time left, and unwilling to go away without making his meaning clear.

The idea of death, which he fancied a welcome one, had during those last days suddenly become frightful to him; his whole being struggled against it. He saw himself lying in state, clad in his full Regalia, for the multitude to stare at; almost did he smell the scent of exotics and of burning wax peculiar to such occasions, and he wondered how the pulses of his heart could go on beating, with so grewsome an expectation to hasten it towards the end. In a few hours, most likely, people would be hurrying to and fro to prepare his remains for that supreme pageant—the last in which he would take part!

"One does not feel when one is dead." He must have kept on repeating this to himself mechanically, for mechanically he wrote it again and again on the little paper squares which, like great Acherontia moths, fluttered in the summer breeze blowing through the wide-open windows of his room, when the breathless Emperor gave himself up to those terrible visions which broke

upon him and faded away again like the whirring gyrations of a zoëtrope.

The glory of the June sun had become intolerable to him, and carefully were the blinds pulled down to exclude the glow of the superb blue sky, the breath of the millions of flowers blossoming in the palace gardens, and the amorous twitter of the birds flitting amid the newly unfolded leafage of the brilliantly green trees.

At night, when the stars peeped forth from the darkened vault—which seemed to him now unusually near to the earth—he lay gazing at them between his fits of suffocation; his dying hopes, wonders, resolves, plans, and longings, stealing forth from the silvery twilight of the rising moon in a silent but complete procession of hooded phantoms, pitilessly obsessing him with the bygone fragrance of the dreams that had drifted away in the buffeting of Fate's cruel storm.

The voice of a bugle ringing out from the nearest barracks often resurrected for him his brilliant military past; great events thronged round him whispering of long-forgotten incidents, of the battle-fields of France, where the wounded and dead of both armies had lain heaped up in the blood-bespattered snow, of the triumphant re-entry into Berlin, to the sound of a music which Frederick heard now as if from another world, and with it all the echo of many passions and many sorrows flowing to some distant ocean of silent waves and impalpable foam.

He knew the measure of his impotence now! Ah, yes, he knew it only too well, when thus the graves in his heart gave up their dead.

He had striven and failed utterly. His defeat reared itself up before him like a monster in the night, for never could he strive again or fight again like a man. Nor

could he make a friend of his pain, and use it as a spur to urge him to new effort, since the end of all things earthly had come for him. But death, perhaps, would tell him everything, would explain—as we are told to hope—why such agonies are permitted by One all merciful to His creatures, would tell him the secret of life, what it meant and to what it led.

The one comfort which this sorely stricken man found during these last days and nights of torture was the constant presence beside him of his daughter-in-law, whose great and delicate tenderness was like a balm to his wounded spirit. Princess Augusta-Victoria was to him then a daughter in the full acceptance of the term, a strong, reliant helper, a devoted and indefatigable nurse, with a singularly human and sympathetic gleam in the azure of her gentle eyes, and he had never realized so well as then how precious simple and natural goodness is in a woman.

She had had to face much already, this young mother who now so constantly bent over him, and how brave, self-sacrificing, forgiving, nay, even utterly forgetful of injustice and offence, did she prove herself to be! She spoke ever in a low, harmonious, soothing voice, which lulled the excitement of the twitching, nightmare-ridden patient in his worst hours of suffering, when, crazed almost and haggard, he panted despairingly for the breath which was drawn-in horribly with a sort of sob through his lacerated throat, and when beating his arms in the air as if clutching at some support, he found it in the cool, firm, caressing clasp of her hands. When the flush of fever appeared on the livid gray of his cheeks, when he tossed on his pillows as if they were filled with live coals, a passion of pity would keep her on her knees beside him murmuring words of encouragement, which hushed his piteously stifled groans;

untiring, always ready to cheer and to protect, ever calm and consoling, as if her force of endurance had no limit, while every one else about was dazed and helpless. Truly, she alone had the secret to comfort and soothe him, be strong for him and help him; she alone seemed able to patiently endure the strain of waiting near him for the fast-approaching end of so much wretchedness, for his last summons upon earth.

The morning of June 15, 1888, rose with heavy summer rain. The sky was a lowering arch of deluge, littered with clouds ragged and fringed as if torn from some immense pall. The breeze that had blown during the night and refreshed the sick-room had dropped like a broken wing, and the light was dull and gray in color, blotting out the whole landscape and the stagnant shapes of the dripping trees.

The Imperial patient was sinking fast; he lay with closed eyes, and a whistling intake of breath, awful to hear, shook the very curtains of his bed. From time to time, when there was a few minutes' respite in his sufferings, he would open those glazing orbs and apparently take a shuddering notice of the steady tattoo of the rain on the palace roofs, as if he realized that even nature was weeping for him, but next moment a new pang would make him quiver with the old restlessness of helpless agony.

Outside, in spite of the weather, many people had gathered. The news that within a few hours, for the second time in three months, Prussia was to be robbed of a King, had rushed like wild-fire through Potsdam, and in awed and terrified silence men and women stood in the splashing gravel and mud, gazing with frightened eyes at Frederick's well-known windows.

The morning went monotonously on its weary way, all traffic was at a stand-still, and barely did any of

those watching and waiting take time to swallow a few hurried mouthfuls at noon.

It was late in the afternoon of that dismal summer day when the black-and-white Royal Standard above the palace slowly glided downward, announcing to the drenched multitude that their King, eighth of his line and second German Emperor, was dead.

A hoarse murmur rumbled through the crowd like the sudden roll of a crape-muffled drum, a murmur which partook of the nature of a groan or a magnified gasp, but which died away abruptly—killed by overwhelming astonishment—when suddenly orderlies were seen running hither and thither, and troops hastily deployed on all sides to form an impassable cordon of gleaming bayonets between the palace and all the rest of the world.

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In an inner room of the great building—a room which had merely a view of the gardens, and where deep, almost complete silence reigned, he who but a moment before had been Crown Prince William was walking slowly up and down. His manner was that of a man who has fully realized the gravity of his situation, and yet he was neither flustered nor in any way excited. It had been glaringly apparent to him for some weeks past, that the death of his father would be in more ways than one a dangerous crisis for Germany and for himself. The position was not a pleasant one. For three months he had been surrounded by hostile people, and now there seemed to be no hope of his assuming control without some display of mastery, which again would pass for cruelty and lack of feeling.

His prompt action in cutting all communication between the palace and the town had therefore been not

the result of impulse, but the deliberate execution of a previous decision.

William II., by the Grace of God King of Prussia, by that of his army German Emperor, possessing fifty-four nobiliary titles, and, in spite of all possible Constitutions, an almost intact omnipotence, was now a man to reckon with, educated and informed to his very finger-tips, deeply read, immensely clever, a perfectly finished "*beau-idéal*" at once of nineteenth-century up-to-dateness and of mediæval energy, valor, and strength; a man who would invariably know what to do, and would do it better than his compeers—upright, physically and morally trim and perfectly determined.

To all men comes sooner or later the moment wherein their lives are suddenly thrust into their own hands to shape or to spoil, to make or to mar; this man, at least, would neither spoil nor mar his; his initiative was not overshadowed by that of Bismarck or of any one else; he was thoroughly genuine, thoroughly original, thoroughly himself in spite of all that may have been said to the contrary. Behind his cold, sometimes sneeringly assumed indifference there had always lurked a steady energy, a perfect self-command, and that odd and rare mixture of self-confidence and diffidence which is sure to attain success in the world. Moreover, he was extraordinarily ambitious for his country, which is the finest and noblest ambition a man may harbor, and that is just why his first proclamations were addressed to his army and his navy. But of this more anon.

A hurricane of denunciation greeted the young Emperor's action in surrounding with troops the palace, where the body of his father had not had time as yet to grow cold. That was to be anticipated, for so lofty a wall of misapprehension as that then surrounding Germany's new Monarch could not be expected to

fall in ruins at the mere blast of the trumpet proclaiming him Imperator et Rex. Yet, was this action unnecessary? Could it have been avoided? No, a million times no, as it is easy to show, and will be shown immediately; but its far-reaching results only go to prove how some comparatively unimportant move may at certain moments—like the tiny piece of snow-crust falling on the mountain-side—bring about an avalanche of misconception.

During Frederick's short reign the Liberal party had been temporarily brought to the front, and to their swollen "*amour-propre*" and gigantic expectations nothing seemed impossible.

The death of the Emperor called a brutal halt to their machinations, although they had known from the first, "*à n'en pouvoir douter*," that their supremacy was doomed to be of singularly short duration, and had imprudently vowed aloud to avenge the slights and rebuffs from which they had suffered in the past, should these slights and rebuffs be repeated under the new régime.

It was unfortunate for them that they should have lost the man they were pleased to call their leader, in so tragic a way, but their keen wits saw a means of revenge against his successor which partly consoled them for this disaster—namely, an opportunity to obtain and publish a portion of the chatty and very circumstantial diary which Frederick had, during the last thirty years or so, faithfully but imprudently kept, and which was studded with State and Family secrets.

These compact little volumes were written in the pessimistic tone that strangely enough seemed to pervade the unfortunate Prince's entire life, and it was hoped that in the confusion resulting from the death of the Sovereign they could be smuggled out of the country.

William II. knew this, and knew also that there were some among his dead father's party who would scruple at nothing to pay off old scores and to strengthen the tottering Liberal faction; moreover, some of his father's papers had already been removed from the palace in the days preceding the latter's death, and in order to avoid an impending scandal, he simply put it out of anybody's power to carry further, depredations which would be followed by such serious consequences.

To a man as masculine in his thoughts as the young Emperor, the dramatic effect which was always ascribed to him as of primordial importance did not even occur when he ordered the momentary isolation of the palace. He wanted to prevent his reign being inaugurated by so grave a disaster, and he employed to accomplish this aim the means easiest and nearest at hand—nothing more—without giving a thought to the varied and unintelligent interpretations of a world ever greedy for something to slaver upon.

Nor was he even then completely ahead of his opponents, for on the 12th of the following March the "*Deutsche Rundschau*" actually published an extract from the famous diary, which brought both to the Emperor and to his Chancellor a great deal of vexation and trouble, although the number of the paper in which it appeared was at once confiscated, and the man responsible for its publication promptly arrested.

Emperor William, from the beginning of his reign, acted with the easy independence of the man born to rule, not heeding what opinion he might evoke, what criticism he might have to brave. Resignation and prudence under such circumstances would have been the most reprehensible of virtues.

The man is proved by the hour!

Before concluding this chapter, and while in the ex-

planatory strain, it may be as well to elucidate another point which seems to have been excessively vexatious to the Anglo-Saxon public.

Why was one of William's first acts to order the disuse of the name of "*Friedrichskron*" conferred upon the "*Neues-Palais*" by the "*Friedrichers*" a fortnight before Frederick's death? The young Emperor was taxed openly, when this became known, with having "*gratuitously entered upon a course of demonstrative disrespect towards his father's memory.*"

This is one of the occasions when the world at large made distinctly a fool of itself. Now the world should not make a fool of itself "*en masse.*" It is not seemly, and such a course of conduct includes the risk—never an agreeable one to take—of exciting hearty laughter in those who know.

History, dry and musty though it be, hath one excellent purpose—that to enlighten ignorance about the sometimes obscure causes of many a deed which "*à prima-vista*" seems incomprehensible. Let us, therefore, dig into the yellowing pages recording the Seven Years' War, or, rather, those immediately following it, and we will find the why and the wherefore of William's edict.

The building of the "*Neues Palais*"—new to-day but in name—was begun by Frederick the Great—who might well also have been called the "*Tireless*"—after he had emerged from that long war and needed something fresh to occupy his active mind and superabundant energies. Also, the wily Monarch was by no means sorry to demonstrate to those who believed him totally ruined, that their supposition was both untrue and impertinent, since he could devote in six years—that is, from 1763 to 1769—the, for those times of "*corvée*," really enormous sum of $10,000,000 to the completion of this new undertaking.

It was a place of magnificent proportions, of superb halls and broad staircases, filled with a dazzling wealth of beauty which could not fail to impress all on-lookers. Around it, stretching away in all directions, was a glorious park, while immediately beneath the countless windows were a huge "*Cour d'Honneur*," and lovely gardens, made to blossom in the cruel north like a damask rose in the desert.

Frederick the Great possessed, as every one knows, a deep sense of humor, and never bowed to any lamentable necessity for deceit. Moreover, he was a man who treated and spoke of women as a class—creatures to be dealt with successfully or not, according to no generality or maxim.

Three women had until the peace of Hubertusburg given him a considerable amount of what is called in French, "*du fil à retordre*," or, in other words, these three Graces had tangled the threads of his Sovereign life so intricately that few men could have extricated themselves as he did from the perils and difficulties with which they had beset his way. These three Graces were Empress Elizabeth-Petrovna of Russia, Empress Maria-Theresa of Austria, and Madame de Pompadour—Empress of the King of France's heart! This being the case, the victorious Prussian King, with an irony which in those days was thought both witty and amusing, and which only our deplorably "*bourgeois*" epoch could gibe at—reared upon the dome of his beloved palace three figures representing these superbly beautiful women in the act of eternally upholding the Prussian Crown, which they had done their very best to snatch from him.

The irony may have been "*risquée*," but the eighteenth century was somewhat given to that sort of thing, and when a man has just gone through seven years of the bitterest life-and-death struggle, he shows a

great deal of "*esprit*" indeed in contenting himself with merely immortalizing the lovely shapes of his fair but relentless enemies.

Be this, however, as it may, it is a patent fact that Frederick the Great is held, and justly so, in especial veneration by his Imperial descendant, William II., and that the "*Neues-Palais*" was from his earliest childhood a favorite residence. There he romped with his brother Henry in the spacious, high-ceiled nurseries, and both royal boys thought even then proudly of their illustrious ancestor, of his indomitable energy, his extraordinarily sagacious statesmanship, and his wellnigh unequalled glory as a war lord. When, therefore, those who had done so much to embitter his own life; when, I say—not his dying father, as has erroneously been stated, but his father's party—the vexatious, tactless "*Friedrichers*" had the incomparable audacity to coolly change the name of the pet achievement and principal memorial of Prussia's national hero in order to assert their own importance and arrogance, he made immediate use of his newly acquired power to erase this piece of vandalism and to reinstate the old order of things.

Those who blame him for it display, in my humble opinion, a good deal more than a crass ignorance of all that had gone before. It is not good always to meddle with the past, for

> "Who when they slash and cut to pieces,
> Do so with civilest addresses?"

CHAPTER VIII

When William began his career in the army, his Imperial grandfather, in a speech memorable for its quiet and convincing eloquence, reviewed the policy of the House of Hohenzollern. Passing back two hundred and fifty years, to the days when the ambitions of that House were circumscribed by the frontiers of the petty Baltic principality of Brandenburg, he instanced the conduct of each of his predecessors: Frederick William, the Great Elector, and his son, Frederick I., who first grasped, the one the essentials of royal power, the other its outward symbol, the Crown; Frederick William I. and Frederick the Great, who by wisdom in council and courage in the field extended and rendered firm and permanent the Monarchy, thus making possible that splendid recuperative effort which, under the direction of the third Frederick William, not only dragged Prussia from the grasp of Napoleon, but, England aiding, gave him his death-blow. He touched upon each King down to the time when he himself had inherited the Throne, and showed that the attention and energies of each one, the strongest as well as the least successful, had been concentrated upon the army; that it was upon the army that the greatness of the Fatherland had always rested, and to which was due every accession of territory from the acquisition of the name and province of Prussia from Poland, in the seventeenth century, down to the conquest of Alsace-Lorraine in 1871.

He exhorted the young man from this very outset of his career to cling to the unvarying and well-proven traditions of his family, to build the edifice of his reign upon this sure corner-stone, that had been tested by his ancestors; to spare no care or pains, to consider no detail too small, no jot or tittle of military organization as negligible or insignificant, but to devote himself to, and to rely upon, first, last, and all the time, the army —always the army!

William II. is before all things a soldier. He has followed to the letter the instructions of his august grandsire; he has done more for the army and navy of his country than any of the Sovereigns who preceded him on the Throne; and yet, with that peculiar bent towards indiscriminate blame which the world has found fit to display towards him, he is accused even to-day of "*exultant militarism.*"

The first proclamation to his soldiers, to which I alluded in the last chapter, and which he closed by saying, "*We belong to each other, I and the army; thus we were born for one another; and firmly and inseparably will we hold together, whether it is God's will to give us peace or storm,*" was imputed to him as a piece of unwarrantable boastfulness, which aroused, as one intelligent author kindly states, "*the contemptuous laughter of Europe!*" while another, equally brilliant and apposite, is good enough to inform his readers that "*an evil day for Germany has dawned with the advent of this presumptuous youth!*" and that "*a groan of despairing disgust is rising from every part of the globe where people are watching German affairs!*"—this is textual.

Calumny is a disease, but so is wilful misapprehension—a disease which spreads, eating its unwholesome way through invisible tissues. It reaches the Sovereign on his gilded throne just as securely and cruelly as the

poor man in his hovel, because it is based on lies, and it creates in those submitted to its baneful influence a sort of nausea of the soul infinitely hard to bear. It tarnishes the cleanliness and sensitive delicacy of the purest and most innocent; to some natures it causes a feeling of shame and personal degradation, to others fits of impotent fury, for against its insidious assaults no cure is of avail. It is a swollen river rolling on its obstinate way; a rank morsel the flavor of which never becomes stale to the human palate; a sea the unfathomable depths of which are still unexplored; a mountain of which the dizzy heights have never been quite reached; an evil magician freezing warm rivers of love as he goes, easily fording cold streams of hatred and stepping victoriously through vast plains where strange growths are born beneath his feet, and where he leaves behind him a track of tears, humiliation, and dread.

The only effect wilful misapprehension or misinterpretation or any other sort of injustice has ever had upon William II. is to make his eyes flash with a dull blue gleam—which is rather terrifying to behold—for his philosophy is that of a rare school, not solely confined to making the best of other people's troubles. His own difficulties have been too great not to have taught him how to meet unfairness with contempt; and so, when meeting with it, with a sort of quick mental jerk—as if making an almost mechanical effort to recover a momentarily wavering balance—he resumes his every-day attitude as if nothing had come to disturb his tranquillity.

On the 18th of June, 1888—that is, three days after his father's death—he gave out a manifesto to the Prussian people, concluding with words which have evidently been ever since then constantly before his eyes, since his deeds during the past sixteen years have fairly mirrored them:

"I have vowed to Almighty God that, after the example of my forefathers, I will be a just and clement Prince to my people, that I will foster piety and the fear of God, and that I will protect the peace, promote the welfare of the country, be a helper to the poor and distressed, and a true guardian of the right!"

Yet that persistent enmity with which he has been viewed, that unalterable prejudice with which the world has chosen to read something repellent between the lines of a straightforward and noble reign, elected to call this *"a vainglorious harangue!"* Truly, man is an ugly animal, ever seeking whom he may devour! William II., during those first days, when from the restless multitude came a dull, continuous roar as of a muddy disturbed ocean, was certainly enabled to add to his experiences of the world and its ways many further illustrations tending towards contempt of it. *"Mais telle est la vie!"*

When Emperor William II. gave forth to his people that he would for the first time open the Reichstag on the 25th of July, 1888, a great curiosity compelled all Germany's minor Sovereigns to come in person, or to cause themselves to be represented by their Heirs-Apparent, and, indeed, that imposing ceremony turned out to be the most extraordinarily brilliant of its kind ever performed at Berlin.

The young Emperor's entrance created a sensation. Accompanied by the aged Regent of Bavaria and the old King of Saxony, he moved slowly and with the natural dignity which, until that day, had remained unperceived by the greater number of those present, while an almost mysterious stillness seemed to envelop him. His slim, graceful figure had acquired something almost solemn in its appearance from the long velvet mantle falling in rich folds about him, and his stern

face looked to unusual advantage beneath the eagle-crested silver helmet he wore.

As a pageant, this particular Reichstag-opening was gorgeous and impressive beyond compare, and as a triumph, few men ever knew one greater than that day brought to William, for from the very moment when he cast his eyes upon the dazzling picture that the crowd of superbly uniformed Princes and great dignitaries composed in the magnificent hall, he realized that for the first time he held his public in the hollow of his hand. It was not in his nature to find solace and consolation for long years of injustice in the spontaneous homage of an assembly of people hitherto obdurate and recalcitrant; but he could not forbear for one fleeting second to glance into the one pair of eyes wherein tenderness and sympathy had constantly glowed for him, as if to lay these his first laurels at the feet of the young Empress, who, draped in the long crêpe veils of deep mourning, with no relief to it save that afforded by the marvellous fairness of her skin and the glitter of some Orders, stood behind him, looking better than she had ever done in that contrast of blond comeliness with the sombre robe and head-dress she wore.

On the topmost step of the dais, erect, motionless, and holding in one hand the parchment whereon his speech was engrossed, while the other grasped the hilt of his great sword, this new Emperor, whom every one had distrusted, aroused boundless astonishment and amaze. The purple and gold of the Throne shone behind him, and when he spoke, the melody of a voice, marvellously tuned to the highest expression of human feeling and of human eloquence, rolled through the silence of the lofty hall, with an impressiveness so utterly unexpected that its peroration was greeted by a low murmur of genuinely enthusiastic admiration. The cynical hearers,

who had come disposed to cavil and to sneer, and who had prophesied much evil, were smitten with a momentarily sincere remorse, and two great tears stole down the cheeks of the woman whom this cynicism and injustice towards her idolized Consort had so grievously wounded, and fell on the sparkling diamonds of her Orders.

Nor was there wanting in this Emperor's dignity the sympathetic touch that is as the stamp upon the gold, for as, in the momentary hush that followed the address, Bismarck advanced to receive the scroll, and bowed his gray head to kiss the hand of his young Sovereign, William gently withdrew it, smiling, and slightly moving his head with a gesture of negation. It was a gracious tribute from youth to age, from the one who puts on the armor to him who is about to take it off.

"*When the time comes he will astonish Europe!*" so had Gortchakòw spoken. One could always rely implicitly upon the predictions of that strange Muscovite Wizard! Was, then, this imposing Monarch, so full of authority and impressive eloquence, the taciturn, sombre, silent youth so often accused of temper and of sullenness? He was not yet thirty and looked younger on that day, although past sorrow and pain had marked two deep lines on either side of the firmly chiselled lips; the steadfast, sapphire-hued eyes sparkled with determination, and conveyed in some indefinite way the impression that this Monarch was in his element, that he had glided into a position for which he was especially created, and that the calm, speculative scrutiny with which he faced his hearers would unhesitatingly separate the chaff from the valuable grain among those serried, multi-colored ranks. This soldier-King would not rest, it seemed plain, until he had done his duty to the uttermost end, and the faint shadow of a smile hovering now upon his clear-cut features was emphatically *not* one of approval.

There is no man who can boast that he is free from the trammels of duty, for duty is a certainty from which none can escape; but the duties which henceforth devolved upon this particular Anointed of the Lord were truly titanic in their proportions, and none but a man of his indomitable energy could have trained himself so perfectly to assume them under the galling volleys of abuse levelled at him for years, without wavering and faltering at some time or another. His gallant work lay now before him quite clearly. He had sworn to accomplish it in its entirety, and the last sixteen years have proved that he spoke naught else but the truth.

And what of Prince Bismarck? Was the new Ruler of the German Confederation really, as the Liberal party claimed, completely in the grasp of his great Chancellor? There, again, tongues wagged far faster than truth should have allowed! The Hohenzollerns are a stiff-backed, masterful race, extraordinarily opposed to anything but personal government, not much given to accepting advice, clinging every one of them with unimpaired strength to the old kingly traditions of Prussia.

Constitutionalism and the acceptance of modern governmental ideas were a mistake in that region, as Emperor William I. had found out, and bitterly to his cost, in 1862. His kindly heart revolted against the idea of adopting violent measures to defend the Monarchy against its countless enemies, and of being, perchance, forced to sweep the streets of his capital with grape-shot in defence of law and order. This accounts for his sagacious resolve to recall from Paris, where he was exercising the functions of Ambassador, the one man capable of helping him in so sore a dilemma.

Otto von Bismarck was an exceptional man in work, deed, and thought; his soldierly frame and grim, hard features betrayed so much at one glance. Like many

great men he found his "*métier*" by accident, when his King hurriedly sent for him, and officially appointed him Minister of his House and of Foreign Affairs, secretly charging him to make Prussia walk straight in the path of duty, without the help—or hinderance—of a Parliament.

The quick defiance hurled by the Liberals to the Conservatives had drawn Count Bismarck from the gay, frivolous French capital to the dreary city on the Spree, where the very paving-stones were about to be dyed with blood, and where deadly hatred awaited him. The sulphurous smoke of revolution filled his nostrils when he arrived, but his upraised finger and his severe, unreassuring eyes produced an almost magical effect upon the turbulent rioters.

It sometimes is thus when a man whose courage is practically without bounds and whose scruples are not numerous makes a sudden appearance upon such a scene. He made from the first no secret of his independence of all political parties, nor of the fact that he was, above everything else, the man of the King, and assumed, with admirable serenity, the anomalous position of a non-Royal personage who runs a Monarch's risks.

Bismarck was a born Ruler. His great knowledge of political, governmental, and military subjects, his instinctive divination of men's motives, saved him from the many pitfalls that usually lie concealed in the path of all who assume the prerogatives of Sovereign power without occupying a well-defended Throne, and during those foreboding days after his return from Paris he had many an occasion to prove what metal he was made of. Indeed, he was a surprise to those who had only looked upon him as a clever diplomat, in spite of his martial appearance, for there was a resolution in his

harsh eyes which gave, I have been told, those who met them then an unpleasant shock.

The relations between the King and his Minister were something quite apart, and not without their touching element. First of all, they were genuinely and deeply fond of one another, true and loyal to each other always. When one watched them together—were it but for a few minutes—the perfect sympathy existing between them fairly rose up and buffeted one in the face.

As love is inexplicable, so is such a friendship. No man born of woman can explain precisely the why and the wherefore of such things, and, moreover, there is nothing that brings men so close together as a common grievance or a common danger. In most cases, however, there is sure to arise, sooner or later, in such situations a spirit of competition, of jealousy even. No such feeling ever crept between King William of Prussia and Otto von Bismarck during the long years of their intimacy.

There existed between those two men many an analogy. The same strict attention to the matter in hand, a mutual and common respect for perseverance and power of endurance, and a quiet, superior capacity for settling down "*de concert*" without delay to the regulation of necessary details, which made them go wonderfully smoothly in a sort of idealized double-harness. Also, one cannot conceive of it as possible to have educated the manliness out of either of them, which is one of the highest compliments one can pay to their joint memory.

Their respective status, too, had this of good in it, that there could be no serious thought of real rivalry, that in the work they did together there need be no question of first and last; and be it said in justice to Bismarck, that one of the finest traits of his char-

acter was the fashion in which he invariably effaced himself officially before his Royal Master. Indeed, during the last eighteen years of the latter's life, his devoted Chancellor carried the fear of wounding this august friend's sensitiveness to so great an extent that he absolutely declined to appear either at the opera or at any other public place of amusement, lest the popular ovations to which his presence invariably gave rise should be as loud and enthusiastic as those that greeted the old Sovereign on similar occasions.

Little did either of these wonderfully matched friends think that the intimacy inaugurated by the revolutionary troubles of 1862 was to run a smooth and steady course, extending from thence throughout this strange and perilous pilgrimage that we call life, without their even for an instant losing their kinship of mutual esteem and respect.

It was difficult for the old Chancellor to realize when William II. ascended the Throne that he no longer had to deal with the old and valued patron who had so constantly played into his hands, nor that the blue-eyed baby whom he had dandled on his knee, the youth he had counselled often and treated as he would one of his own children, was now his Sovereign Master. Difficult, too, it was for the young Emperor to act otherwise than in a quasi-filial way towards his beloved grandfather's old friend and adviser. On both sides the position was a terribly thorny and delicate one, demanding oceans of mutual tact and forbearance to make it at all bearable.

I have always deeply sympathized with William in that regard, for I remember how greatly taken aback I was when, after returning from my first wedding-trip, I found myself confronted in my husband's household by a pearl of a steward who had reigned there supreme

since my grandfather-in-law's time, and who was so precious, so admirable, and so imbued with a sense of these qualities that to offer, not a reprimand—that was, of course, quite out of the question—but a mere observation, savored of unpardonable ingratitude, not to say downright brutality. There was in that old man's eyes an intelligence that stood apart; it seemed to refer to the past he so gloried in, or, perchance, to the future, which evidently appeared to him draped in the gloomiest colors, while his incorrigible leisureliness prevented a rendering of full justice to his present powers. These eyes used to rest upon me with a sort of wandering attention when I ventured to propose the slightest alteration in his adamantine laws, and there was something in his attitude that denoted such cruel and unmerited reproach, and in the tones of his voice a sort of respectful revolt, never rising to argument nor descending to remonstrance, which made my own position quite untenable. The truth is that it would have been a hopeless one as well, had not Providence intervened, rather drastically, alas! as far as this irreplaceable and worthy functionary was concerned, for, as befitted his lofty opinion of himself, he was laid low by that aristocratic malady called rich-man's gout, to such an extent that he had to be pensioned off, and that his place in my realm knew him no more.

William II., shortly after ascending the Throne, became aware of the urgent necessity of taking immediate steps to prevent Bismarck from handicapping him too heavily, by the preponderance he strove to retain in matters governmental, and also to make him understand, as gently and affectionately as possible, that he, the Emperor, intended to reign alone in Prussia.

At first the aged Chancellor failed to recognize the gravity of the peril confronting him. He had dur-

THE EMPEROR A FEW YEARS AFTER HIS ACCESSION

ing too many years pervaded in a subtle but all-powerful fashion the whole atmosphere of Prussia to imagine the possibility of being relegated to a secondary place; but at last, to his almost pathetic bewilderment, it began to dawn upon him that he had stumbled in the dark upon a force far greater than himself.

All at once he became restless and full of suspicion, for, poor old man! not only was the happiness of his remaining years at stake, but also the future of that Bismarckian dynasty which he had fondly hoped to found. He had dreamed of seeing, before he died, his eldest son as powerful in Germany as he was then himself, and he proceeded to charge upon the impassable obstacles suddenly raised before him with all his old, reckless self-confidence.

Quite undisturbed, cool, courteous, friendly to the last, the young Emperor awaited his attack, for he understood perfectly that the time for battle had come, and, possessing in a marked degree that greatest power of all, which consists in going right inside the mind of another and of divining the things that are there, he was quite certain to easily thwart every plot concerted to circumvent him. He said nothing, imparted no confidences to any one, betrayed no haste nor impatience, but stood firm as a rock, armed "*cap-à-pie*," a strangely peaceful but very grim figure, difficult to assail. His attitude was extraordinarily forcible, yet quite devoid of violence, and might have been characterized as wonderfully weather-wise.

To Prince Bismarck, however, it was dreadfully unsatisfactory, and served to increase by leaps and bounds his feverish irritability, which was soon to be lashed into a white fury of indescribable magnitude. The storm was approaching, premonitory lightnings ran over the aged Chancellor's heavens, making the sky seem

darker for their passage. He himself showed a surprising lack of self-restraint, and losing what age and fatigue had left him of that wonderful sagacity in matters political, for which he was so justly famed, he blundered heavily several times.

Behind his half-closed vizor William peered forth into the tempest. There was no question of fending off such torrents of newspaper attack, and threats either to resign or to join the opposite camp, as his maddened Chancellor used for weapons; indeed, the onslaught seemed in no way to discompose the young Emperor, who watched it all with a slight smile of amusement, which was full of significance to the initiated.

Bismarck, meanwhile, grew bolder and bolder, less and less guarded. His own opinion of himself rose to dizzier and dizzier heights, and brought him to that pass where master and servant seem to stand equal before the levelling potency of a sorely embittered personal feeling.

The autocratic airs which the struggling Chancellor and his somewhat rough-natured son, Herbert, gave themselves at that time would have infuriated a man less sure of himself and less merciful than William. He never forgot for a moment, however, how mighty and superb a figure in German history Bismarck really had been; constantly he remembered also, that the Berserker fight now going on was waged by an enfeebled old man, who was slowly being wedged into a corner by his, William's, uncompromisingly steel-like but velvet-gloved grip, and under no circumstances did he allow himself to display anything but the deepest kindness, and a courtesy and indulgence which were, perchance, but a greater aggravation to his brusque and obstinate opponent.

He made a point during the last days of this extraor-

dinary conflict to dine several times "*en grand gala*" at Prince Bismarck's palace in the Wilhelmstrasse, and of talking sympathetically and most graciously to his depressed and cruelly pre-occupied host. Nor was this a clever dodge, or the play of a cat with a helpless mouse, but the outcome of the absolutely genuine affection which, at the bottom of his heart, William still bore the man who had been the ideal of his whole youth —the man for whom he would always entertain a deep personal reverence as the most illustrious servant of his Dynasty, and the foremost among the creators of the new German Empire. Every one of his actions, nay, the slightest of his words, was marked by the most delicate and high-bred courtesy, and he certainly did all that lay within his power to avoid giving unnecessary pain to his doomed Chancellor.

Our lives have a knack of reaching strangely back into the lives of our grandfathers; the beginnings made there come down into our daily existences, shaping our thoughts and actions; and that which just then stood between William II. and Prince Bismarck — as far as William was concerned, at any rate—was not the present need of his services, but the fading rays of glory still sparkling as a dazzling halo around the head of this giant among European statesmen, and the traditions of respect, gratitude, and admiration for the old Chancellor inherited by all bearing the name of Hohenzollern.

"'Tis one thing to be tempted,
Another thing to fall!"

At last, however, the crisis came. In the course of an interview between the Emperor and his tottering Chancellor, when William was expressing with all possible gentleness his natural disapproval of some un-

authorized act of Bismarck, the latter, in a sudden rush of irrepressible anger, gave voice to the very words that it was uppermost in his mind to restrain. Suddenly his trembling lips, almost, it would seem, in defiance of his own will, blurted out the old familiar and effective threat of instantaneous resignation from office.

The Emperor said nothing either in protest or otherwise, and passed on to other subjects, leaving his erstwhile so wily Premier a prey to the uttermost depths of humiliation and of self-contempt. He simply had nothing to say! His mind had suddenly become blank, and with a strangely touching refinement of kindness, the Emperor managed to put a close to the audience without seeming to notice the old man's profound perturbation.

Two hours afterwards, however, an Imperial aide-de-camp came in the Emperor's name to receive the official and written resignation so incautiously proffered. He found Bismarck smarting under a sense of injury most exasperatingly indefinite, although his mood savored strongly of the disgust of the outwitted; his eyes flashed dangerously—so the aide-de-camp remarked afterwards—and he sent back an evasive reply, explaining that he had as yet not found time to write the resignation out, but would do so later, and present it in person to His Majesty on the morrow.

At that moment a sudden ray of hope shot, no doubt, athwart the future into which Bismarck was staring as if hypnotized. Yes! he would stoop to pleading, if necessary; he would use all the powers at his command to reawaken the tremendous personal influence and magnetism he knew himself to possess, in order to secure the reconsideration of the Imperial verdict; but he had once again reckoned without his host, for not only did he find himself unable to obtain an audience from

his Sovereign on the next day, without the aid of ridiculous persistency, but he could not avoid the inexorable aide-de-camp, who seemed determined — "*bien contre son gré*" assuredly — to preempt a permanent domicile in the "*salon d'attente*" adjoining the Prince's study in the Wilhelmstrasse, and who, quiet, self-contained, deeply respectful, but intrepid, patiently awaited that once too often threatened resignation.

Caught in his own trap as helplessly as any yearling of diplomacy, Bismarck, cruelly mortified and unspeakably indignant, was thus forced to sign his own dismissal, and with the almost supernatural rapidity with which such news travels, it became known a few minutes later across the whole length and breadth of the Prussian capital that the Iron Chancellor had fallen.

It is impossible not to feel the sincerest pity for Bismarck at that moment, when he was left to gulp down as best he might his nauseating surprise. Some one who saw him then told me that for several days his face remained livid, that the blue of his dim old eyes seemed to be suddenly faded to an ashen gray, and that he talked in a pitiful, lifeless voice, as if his whole being was contracted with horror and with pain. Whatever Bismarck had done to deserve his fate, he was now an object of such pity that before it, all partisanship, all personal hatred disappeared.

Once again a murmur of "*Royal ingratitude*" ran throughout Germany, and strong and hardened though the Emperor was against unjust criticisms, yet this time his nerves were all a-tingle with exasperation, for if ever a man had shown patient gratitude it was he, especially in this instance, and he knew it.

There was, indeed, a strange irony in this sudden "*volte-face*" of a large part of the German people with regard to one so long and so loudly proclaimed their

tormentor. Yesterday many had been unanimous in their curses, to-day they were ready to rise up as one man to call him blessed—this Iron Chancellor beneath whose relentless hand Kingdoms had trembled and been shaken to dust! This almost hysterical see-sawing back towards him, this complete "*ratting*," this sudden genuflection before the enemy, had its good side, however, for the Berlinese made the dethroned Chancellor's departure the occasion for a great popular demonstration, and it is well that they did so, since the spectacle of the cold-blooded desertion of so truly great a man would have been a new offence to human nature.

It must be confessed that Bismarck had nobody to thank but himself for his downfall. He had never cared whether he was loved or hated; he had contemptuously thrust from him all that was not strength and cunning; he had displayed a callous audacity which had never poured oil on troubled waters, but cast it carelessly on flames; and, at the last, when his blood was hot and his brain fermenting like yeast because he had found his master, wrath for once had clouded his keen perceptions, and he had committed the fatal mistake which had laid him low.

The survival of the strongest had been his law; why did he now demur at it, because *he* no longer was the strongest, because his hour had come, and in one brief moment all his greatness had turned to ashes in his mouth? But his sense of humiliation and fury at being thwarted had been too deep. Temper is always a bad adviser. It had advised him badly during those last few months, when he had dealt wholesale in thunder and lightning. Alas! the terrible, slow kindling, but overwhelming anger of this great Northerner had been his destruction.

The young Emperor had gone patiently through to the end, always hoping against hope to be spared the pain of separating from his old friend. He had found out some things which had surprised him, however, and gradually he had become convinced that for the honest accomplishment of his purpose, for Germany's welfare, especially, the removal of Bismarck was imperative. His whole self-training had been one of devotion to duty, so now, as all through his previous life, did he do what he considered his duty, although reluctantly, and only when he had been pushed to his very last entrenchments.

The last straw had been Prince Bismarck's extraordinary conduct with regard to the Berlin International Labor Congress, which William had set his heart upon, thinking that this might, perchance, be a means other than Bismarck's harsh measures for solving the socialistic and labor problems, which were proving more and more vexatious throughout Europe, and had lately become especially acute in Germany.

The idea was a wonderful one—of that there can be no doubt—and a generous. It was dictated by one of those unselfish impulses which, if the world were different from what it is, would have resulted in good spreading over Europe like sunlight over a ripening field; but the warm-hearted young Sovereign had yet to learn one bitter lesson, and that was that any endeavor to try and raise the lower orders, to educate the masses above the station which they can hope to occupy in life, is to open wider the door to nihilism, socialism, riots, ingratitude, and all their accompanying evils, and that any such project is bound to be crumpled up by the treachery of the socialistic leaders and agitators themselves. Doing good to mankind wholesale does not pay; the angels in heaven might devise such plans, but even they could

not carry them out here below. It is a sad but undeniable fact that men pick to pieces and degrade everything that is done to pull them out of the mire, and one of which Bismarck was well aware.

Indeed, it is only fair to say here that, realizing the Utopian character of the scheme, and seeing its impracticability, he at first argued with the Emperor on the subject "*sotto quattr' occhi*," but finding that his new Sovereign was not easily argued out of anything, he resorted, alas! to other and less laudable means in order to prevent the Conference from taking place. First of all, he proceeded to loudly ridicule the whole idea, and, what was quite unpardonable, caused it to be scoffed at and treated with derision in the press, which he controlled both at home and abroad.

The Emperor had the pleasure of reading in cold type that when the High and Mighty are eager to dabble in socialistic schemes they should put on old coats, wear red silk scarfs about their necks, and adopt slouch hats as their ordinary head-gear — soft, shabby hats that can be drawn completely down so as to conceal their visages; also, that the realism, the sordid details of such work as William proposed to undertake, were not romantic, and would fail to prove as "*entertaining as this august dabbler in charity deemed it to be.*"

In one word, Bismarck sought in every possible and impossible way to deter William from persevering in his project, and when at last he had to acknowledge himself beaten on that ground, he committed with extraordinary lack of tact and loyalty his supreme "*bêtise*," namely, that of negotiating privately with the various party leaders, with a view to the postponement, if not the complete annihilation, of the famous Conference. He even communicated with the President of the Helvetic Confederation with a view to arranging a Labor Con-

ference at Berne, which would distract the attention of the interested classes from Berlin. This was decidedly going a step too far, and treating Prussia's King too much like a little boy who is anxious to stick his fingers in some forbidden jar of preserves; and when he discovered this unheard-of piece of insolence, the young Monarch made up his mind that if he did not promptly intervene, his autocratic and headstrong Chancellor would attempt to transform him into a mere cipher, a figure-head at the utmost, good only to look well on a Throne, and so he separated himself for good and aye from Bismarck.

This is the true explanation, despite all other legends current on the subject of what it was then the fashion to term "*Emperor William's incredible ingratitude towards Bismarck*," and gives but one more proof of the phenomenal unfairness with which the Emperor was then invariably judged.

As to the Conference, it did not turn out to be a success, probably on the principle that a flower growing out of place is a weed. A movement which had for its purpose to educate, royally feed, and gorgeously clothe the masses—and, incidentally, to teach them to be yet more discontented with their lot—but that is, perchance, only my gloomy way of looking at it—to raise them up until they drag down the classes still above them in their predestined return to the gutter, failed then as it has always failed in the past and will always fail in the future, until the millennium is reached, thanks to the masses themselves. Set a beggar on horseback and one knows what to expect!

The reconciliation of the socialists with the Crown was not to be compassed, and the young Emperor, a wiser and sadder man, took the defeat of his hopes quietly, in his settled and self-contained fashion—like

a person who has played for a big stake, and knowing for certain that it is lost, does not want to play again. He bore it all without apparent disappointment, and even the members of the Conference, whom he received with extreme courtesy and kindness, never knew how very sore he felt over his failure.

As an example of this I will here give a translation of a short pen-sketch of William II., by Jules Simon, one of the members of the Conference, whose testimony must be regarded as singularly unbiased, since as a Frenchman and an ardent republican he was certainly not inclined by racial or political reasons to look with particular favor upon a Prussian Monarch.

"The Congress," he wrote in the "*Revue de Paris*," "was held in the salons of the Chancellerie—that is, in Prince Bismarck's palace of the Wilhelmstrasse, although the Prince was on the eve of his disgrace. The Emperor was not present at our opening séance, and never put in an appearance during the whole time of our debates, but we were all invited to a great reception at Court, to a concert given in honor of the Prince of Wales and to a banquet given in our own. These Monarchical '*fêtes*' were an interesting spectacle for me, who have not been brought up in the lap of Royalty, and for my French colleagues, who had not even known Napoleon III.

"The Imperial palace of Berlin in no way resembles the Tuileries; it is an immense building, very lofty, forming a quadrangle around a large '*Cour d'Honneur*,' and ends by a vast garden-like terrace. The salons where the Emperor habitually receives are at the very top floor, and we were requested to ascend a staircase, which had it not been brilliantly lighted and constructed of white marble, might easily have been mistaken for an '*escalier de service*.' There is another one, im-

AFTER A HARD MORNING'S WORK

mense and superb, but destined for Royal personages only. We landed near an ordinary-sized door, guarded by two splendid and gigantic soldiers, which admitted directly to the salons, where the invited guests were already assembled.

"These salons are very numerous, and did not seem to me to contain many pictures or ornaments; but you will easily understand that little attention was granted to such details, since we were all intent upon watching the Emperor's entry.

"Everybody gravitated towards the great doors at the upper end when Their Majesties were announced. The Emperor and Empress were bowing to right and to left, and spoke for a few moments to the privileged. The Emperor addressed a few obliging and amiable words to me, and so did the Empress, which is a favor rarely accorded. Indeed, I felt immediately that I had just acquired some personal dignity, and not without a little laugh at my own expense wondered whether I was not already transformed into a courtier. This feeling increased wonderfully when the Grand Master of Ceremonies requested me to walk alone immediately behind the Emperor, and to sit down on his right at the table. I was grateful, as I might well be, for these tokens of Imperial favor accorded to my country, which were continued during the whole time of the Congress.

"I sat at table between the Emperor and a lady who I thought was the Grand-Mistress of the Robes. On the Emperor's left sat the Empress, and on the Empress's left sat the Bishop of Breslau, my colleague as Vice-President of the Congress, and who has since become Cardinal Kopp, one of Germany's most illustrious Catholic Prelates.

"M. de Moltke sat directly opposite to the Emperor, and therefore to me, also.

"The Emperor was gracious enough to speak to me during the whole time the dinner lasted. My memory, unfortunately, is not sufficiently good to set down here all he said on that occasion, but I remember every word he addressed to me during my stay in Berlin, although precisely when spoken it is beyond my power to recall.

"On the day of the great Court reception I was not near enough to the Throne to hear clearly, and on that of the concert in the White-Salon I did not come into personal contact with him; but he has created another Court, which he himself described to me, which is as select and envied as that of Marly under Louis XIV., and at which he weekly receives twenty friends. I cite the very words he used: 'I receive about twenty friends, not more, some officers, some professors; the public believes that we hold a sort of secret political council; but, on the contrary, we assemble only to have a little good time, to tipple (*pour godailler*). We speak of art, of literature!' He did me the honor of inviting me to one of those private receptions.

"Again I went up the white marble staircase, this time accompanied by the Minister of Commerce, M. Berlepsch, our amiable and clever President; we stopped at the floor immediately beneath the salons and entered a large room, where there were several officers in uniform. I felt a little lonely and rather embarrassed, not knowing who was the host. It was nine o'clock and the place was not very well lighted, since the gleam of the candles was dulled by the last rays of the setting sun; I therefore vaguely discerned some chairs and a table shaped like a horseshoe, covered with a green rug. Really, I believed myself to be in a waiting-room, when a young officer, detaching himself from a group at the farther end of the apartment, came briskly up

to me and asked me if I had enjoyed the visit I had made to Sans-Souci in the morning.

"It was the Emperor!

"I had visited Sans-Souci, thanks to his permission, and in a carriage graciously lent by him, and he questioned me narrowly as to my impressions of the place. I confessed that I did not greatly admire Voltaire's room, which is rather overloaded with ornamentation. Then he spoke to me of Frederick the Great. 'I have seen the music-stand,' I said, 'but not the flute!' He laughed, and told me that I would at any rate see the music, for he had caused a very fine edition thereof to be printed, and would give me a copy. 'It will be,' added he, 'a souvenir of your sojourn in Berlin!' It would be impossible to be more courteously gracious! The volume was later on sent to me through the German Embassy in Paris.

"As on the day of the banquet, I was told to sit down on the Emperor's right, and we immediately began to smoke and to drink beer; moreover, I had once again the pleasure of a long conversation with the Emperor, since we remained sitting there until midnight.

"I would dearly like to be able adequately to describe this conversation and the Emperor's person; I do not know whether I will succeed. I have never seen him out of uniform; I scarcely think that he ever wears anything else. On that particular evening he had on that of the White Hussars, and, as he is very slender, he looked like a young officer—a lieutenant. I had been told that he was partial to the Hussar uniform, because the hanging dolman dissimulated the stiffness of his left arm, but I never noticed anything peculiar in his attitude with or without dolman, nor even, when quite close to him, saw him display the slightest difficulty in using that arm. Therefore, it is only by hear-

say that I am acquainted with this alleged defect. The Emperor's face is very agreeable, his expression affable and good-natured, his hair is chestnut, with golden tints in the high lights—I speak like the old-fashioned passports—and his complexion rather colorless but healthy, and somewhat tanned by open air. Truly he reminded me of our young Breton or Norman nobles, having their high-bred and charming manner. If I am to be quite truthful, I easily perceived behind this cheerful mien a something denoting that it would be best not to disagree with such a man on grave matters—a careful inspection of his physiognomy and aspect revealed as much. This side of his nature became very apparent to me when I saw him '*en grande pompe*' on his Throne. You know the popular definition of a Throne! 'Four deal boards covered with a little velvet, the strength of which depends on who occupies it.' I think that the Throne of this particular young Monarch is excessively solid, and he proved this two days later, when he broke like a pipe-stem the great Chancellor, reputed all-powerful and eternal!

"On the gala night I refer to, the Empress was in deep mourning. The Emperor wore a White Hussar's uniform, but he was in parade dress, and nobody would then have mistaken him for a mere lieutenant; under his arm he carried a fur-bordered kalpak, surmounted by a tall 'aigrette' attached by an immense diamond. His breast was covered with magnificent decorations from every corner of the globe. It was indeed an Emperor whom we had before us, immobile, impassive, severe, and, as Saint-Simon would have said, 'tripping for no one!'

"Before I go any further I must tell you how he speaks French! Easily? Very easily. Correctly? Very correctly! Had he the slightest accent? Not the very

slightest! Of us two it was he who spoke the better, for I have a slight provincial accent, while the Emperor spoke like a Parisian. He asked me once, laughingly, what I thought of his pronunciation. 'You speak,' I replied, 'like a Parisian.' 'That's not surprising,' quoth he. 'I have a friend'—he always speaks of his servitors as 'friends'—'who was my professor during ten years, and who has remained here with me ever since. He is a Parisian and a purist. Have you noticed whether I ever use an unorthodox expression?' (I am not only an Academician but a member of the Dictionary Commission.)

"'Once,' I said.

"He took alarm.

"'When?' queried he.

"'When Your Majesty, in describing the little private receptions, said "to tipple"' (*pour godailler*).

"'*Godailler* is French!' he cried, triumphantly; 'it is in the Academic dictionary!'

"'It is French, but it is not used by the Academy, nor in Academical Salons!'

"'I will not forget! And was that instance the only one?'

"'I swear it! Your Majesty is also a purist.'

"This seemed to please him hugely, and he allowed me to see that he possesses a deep knowledge of our literature. As I was aware that he keeps himself posted about every detail concerning the government of his vast dominions, of his army and of his navy, and as I now had personally been enabled to judge how extraordinarily busy is his life, I wondered how he could find time to read French novels. He explained to me, however, that nothing pleased him more than to remain quietly at home in the evening with his wife, and that his invariable rule was to read a few chapters of some

good foreign novel to her every night before retiring. This wonderful man, who assimilates everything with magical swiftness, never loses a minute. His greatest antipathy in French literature is Zola.

"Out of patriotism I tried to defend my fellow-citizen by saying that he possessed incomparable diction and power of observation.

"'Yes, he has qualities,' retorted the Emperor, 'but it is not that which made his success—that comes from the filth and villainies with which he poisons his writings. That is just what gives outsiders the right to judge severely the moral state of France at the present moment.'

"'I am told that Zola is going to publish a new book,' he continued. 'You shall see how it will be devoured; all your splendid literature will disappear before this sorry "*chef d'œuvre!*"'

"I hazarded that it would also be read in Berlin.

"'Yes, I dare say, but with disgust, and to a far lesser degree. In Paris it will be in everybody's hands!' was the answer.

"In this he was not quite correct, for having had the curiosity to stroll round next morning to some of the chief bookseller's shops, I found that Zola's books were to be found there in quantities, and I heard later that his vogue was yet greater in London.

"I would have given much to coax from the Emperor some few political opinions, but all my efforts in that direction were vain, and the cleverness with which he evaded me on that particular field filled me with admiration. I succeeded, however, after many repeated and Machiavellian attacks in wrenching from him two sentences which I heard with pleasure. We were talking about war in the abstract.

"'I have thought a great deal on that subject since

my accession,' said he, musingly, 'and I am certain that in my position it is better to do good to humanity than to try to terrify it!' and as I sought to narrow the question down, alluding to a possible war between our respective countries, he added, 'I speak with absolute impartiality; your army has worked hard, has made amazing progress; it is ready, and if by an evil chance there was a war between France and Germany, it would be difficult to predict the consequences and result of such a struggle. That is why I would consider anybody who egged them on to attack each other as a madman or a criminal.'

"The Emperor's sincerity could not be doubted. His words betrayed a well-seasoned and serious conviction. He really desires peace and intends to maintain it as far as lies in his power. Moreover, William II. has already given several instances of his desire to be on friendly terms with France. The present Congress, to which I was invited, together with my friends, Burdeau and Tolain, is one of them, and many more important ones could be cited.

"He was less reticent on socialistic questions, and on that ground I felt that I had a right to be inquisitive, since it was the object of my presence in Berlin to go over it thoroughly. I am at liberty to say that he had made a very conscientious study of the subject. The keen statesman, far more than the mere philanthrope, spoke in him when discussing it, and he put before me the growing anxiety which so grave a danger aroused in him. I, who am far more than anxious about it, confided to him that it would be a good fear to be more afraid of socialism in order to take stronger repressive measures, and he, with a smile, told me quite frankly that he was afraid that for the moment, at least, the present Congress, from which he had hoped so

much, would not prove as successful as he had expected.

"The session of the Congress coincided with the greatest historical event of the German Empire. When we arrived in Berlin, M. de Bismarck was threatened but still powerful; it was rumored that the Emperor would ultimately ask him to resign, but that as yet he did not dare to do so. Nevertheless, he provoked the great man's offer of resignation, accepted and maintained it, all within twenty-four hours. At once the Chancellor was replaced and left Berlin. The French delegates dined at his house on the very eve of his fall, and I was enabled to talk at length with him. He was then still full of confidence.

"As to the Emperor, the way in which he comported himself at that moment is typical. It was clear that he was not inclined to recognize the possibility of difficulties in his path; he knew, evidently, exactly where he was going; he had determined to govern alone and assumed the crushing responsibility without wincing, and the iron influence of the Emperor upon his capital was curious to behold. The name of General von Caprivi as Bismarck's successor was mentioned and created a sensation, for he was neither a politician nor a courtier, merely a good soldier. When it became known that the Emperor had selected him, nobody would at first believe it, especially when he was seen that very night eating his dinner quite alone at a little table in the public dining-room of the Kaiserhof. The news that the Emperor had conferred upon Prince Bismarck the almost Royal dignity of Duke of Lauenburg, was also at first met with incredulity, and a great lady upon whom I was calling, exclaimed, impulsively, 'I hope he will refuse!' then hung her head and appeared to regret her words. Meanwhile the fallen Chancellor was

walking slowly up and down in his garden of the Wilhelmstrasse, quite alone and abandoned, save by two huge Ulmer dogs, his constant companions. It was pitiful, and as I watched him from the windows of our Congress-room, I felt that this neglect must have hurt him even more than his disgrace.

"A lightning change took place, however, and that with quite fairy-like splendor, at the moment of Bismarck's departure. The Berlinese turned out '*en masse*,' thronging the Wilhelmstrasse and all the neighboring thoroughfares, crowding even the great 'Unter den Linden' until traffic became absolutely blocked, and the ex-Chancellor entered his carriage amid the frenzied hurrahs of thousands upon thousands. During a long time his horses could not advance, while flowers fell like an avalanche about his feet and filled the carriage. The Man of Iron was crying! Indeed, the multitude followed him right to the station, where his train had been waiting under full steam since two hours.

"What was the cause of this amazing change in the popular attitude? Simply the Emperor's will. He had expressed a desire that all honor should be done to Bismarck, and two millions of people had responded to this appeal. '*Voilà tout!*' and I may add that not even the great Czar could have testified to such an intensity of influence over his subjects.

"I trust that in these short and incomplete notes my memory has not betrayed me. I trust that I have been exact. The Emperor's attitude with regard to France has been benevolence itself. His message to Madame Carnot at the time of her illustrious husband's assassination has created a deep impression throughout my country. At the very moment when the melancholy and splendid funeral cortège was leaving for Notre-

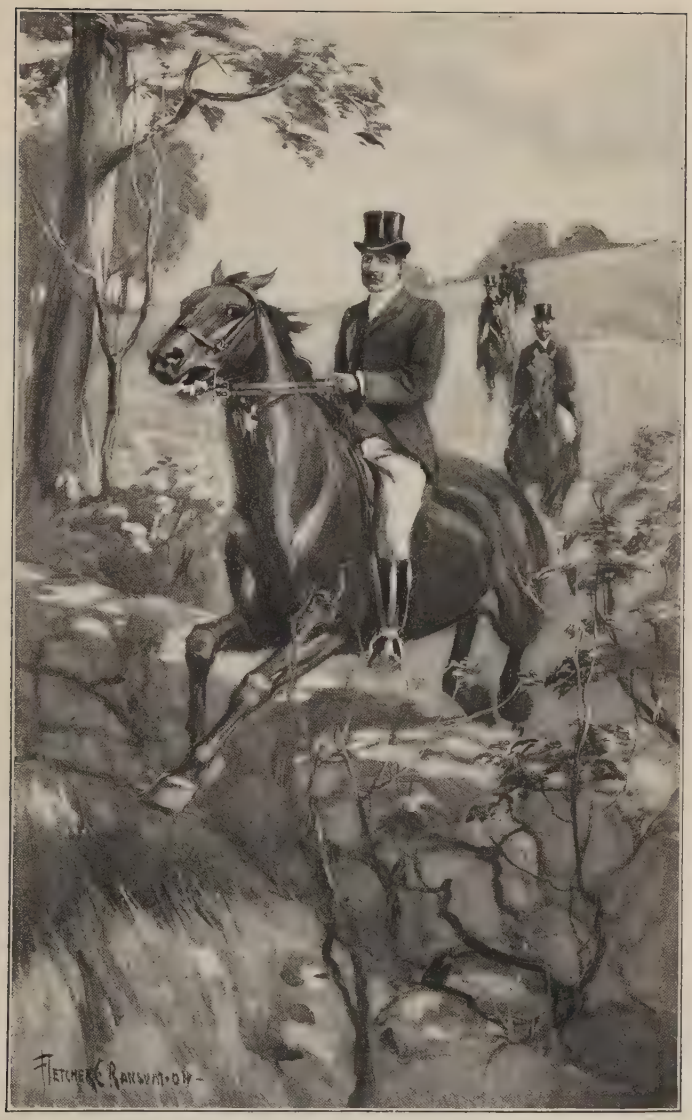
Dame and the Panthéon, M. de Münster, German Ambassador to Paris, advised our Government that his Imperial Master had granted their pardon to two French officers condemned, one to six and the other to four years of incarceration in a German fortress, and when the thanks of the President of the Republic reached the Emperor the two prisoners were already at large. Therefore, M. Carnot's funeral will in history be remembered quite especially as having provoked the first real flash of sympathy between Germany and France. May it be a lasting truce—'the truce of God!'

(Signed) "Jules Simon."

In my translation of the above I have purposely retained what one may term the republican simplicity of phrase, and the short-sentenced chattiness which is all very well in French, but in English seems somewhat bald, because I am of opinion that the "*couleur-locale*" of M. Jules Simon's style adds to the force of this short but pithy and veracious instantaneous portrayal.

The wave of enthusiasm which had unfurled itself about Bismarck on the day of his departure from Berlin was succeeded by silence. As he himself said, bitterly, he was for a long time subjected to a sort of boycott! Formerly he had experienced great difficulty in keeping people away from his country-seat of Friedrichsruh, for everybody strove to pay court to him, or—to state again his own words—"everybody who wanted his goodwill came in regular processions of humble, bowing visitors," but after his downfall he was left in galling and insulting solitude.

This situation was far from inducing a resigned or philanthropic state of mind; indeed, his vituperations against the Emperor and his Government, whenever he managed to secure a hearer, were, to say the least,



THE EMPEROR "CROSS-COUNTRY RIDING"

extraordinarily embarrassing. Nothing was farther from his mind than such sentimentality as grief; he had never been given to such soft weakness, this hard-hearted old warrior, and rage reigned supreme. When he had ruled he had done so with a rod of iron. His purpose had ever been inflexible and his self-control great, but William was the only person who had ever openly opposed him, and, somehow, the pill he had been forced to swallow, in spite of its thickly gilded coating, was insupportably bitter.

In fact, the very gilding contrived to give offence. He had long desired to be made Duke of Lauenburg—an old title appertaining to the House of Schleswig-Holstein—with the rank of a Sovereign, or, at least, Mediatized Prince; but Emperor William I. could not see his way to granting this desire, since it was not a matter to be settled entirely by his own volition. As the Head of an Empire made up of Allied Sovereigns, and containing many Princes who had saved little from the wreck of the Napoleonic wars beyond the bare recognition of their rank, and who were, therefore, not a little jealous of it, he had to request the sanction of his brother Rulers for the project, with an almost absolute certainty that it would be refused.

When, therefore, Emperor William II. made him Duke of Lauenburg, pure and simple, without any of the semi-royal prerogatives for which he longed, the old man was deeply incensed. This meant, among other things, that on all State occasions at Court there were still some dozens of infinitesimal titular Princelets, of whom nobody ever hears, who would, nevertheless, take precedence of himself, one of the most famous men in the world. Not only did he, therefore, ignore the Emperor's gift, and neglect to pay the duties accruing to the State on an accession to a title, but he deliberately returned to

the post-office all mail that arrived addressed to the "Duke of Lauenburg"—certainly rather small conduct for so great a man, who, starting in life poor and loaded with debt, had been showered with honors and rendered one of the wealthiest nobles in Germany by the masters he had served. And, as if in his lifetime he had not showed sufficient resentment, after the old Prince's death the opportunity given to his son and successor to pay the dues and formally assume the title was coolly disregarded, so that the Emperor was obliged to resume his gift, and to formally declare that the Dukedom of Lauenburg had lapsed.

Somehow, the collapse of all his ambitions, political and otherwise, affected the ex-Chancellor physically, and increased the rheumatism and neuralgia from which he suffered so severely that he was now forced to be constantly under medical supervision.

Henry Villard, who visited him at Friedrichsruh some time after his enforced retirement, wrote when describing this short and interesting stay in the "*Sachsenwald*," that never in his whole experience did he encounter such a flow of keen wit, cutting sarcasm, bitter denunciation, and mad diatribe as that used by Bismarck in speaking of his downfall.

"Some of the sayings I heard then," writes Villard, "were so extraordinary that if they were repeated their reality would probably be doubted, and certainly the '*lèse majesté*' they involve would render it unsafe for me to venture again on German soil. The Prince's countenance," he continues, "during the excited delivery of those philippics, was a study! The working of every vein and muscle of the face showed his intense feelings. The play of his great eyebrows was also very remarkable, so was the flashing of his eyes. They seemed incapable of expressing affection, and their steel-

like hardness only inspired awe. To watch the lightning changes of expression mirrored in them, reflecting the strong emotion evoked by humbled pride, wounded ambition, and thwarted selfishness, and above all by the loss of his absolute sway, was indeed an enviable privilege. I left Bismarck with the fixed impression that the Prince never would or could forget or forgive those who caused his compulsory abdication from power, that he felt nothing less than implacable hatred towards them, that any apparent reconciliation on the Prince's part to the new régime that might follow would be only a stage-show and not a reality, that his thirst for revenge would not be quenched as long as he lived, and that he would improve every opportunity to gratify it."

The young Emperor knew all this well, for Henry Villard was by no means the only person to whom Bismarck spoke in that strain, and it must be confessed that it took a singularly generous breadth of soul for him to have not only forgiven so aggressive an attitude, but to have unfailingly displayed even then towards the infuriated old man, a respect and an affectionate courtesy which this lion with filed teeth and claws did all within his power to forfeit.

The recluse of Friedrichsruh could not assimilate the idea of the German Empire continuing to exist without him. He had so accustomed everybody to the idea that he alone insured its safe continuance that he had ended by believing this to be the actual truth. But when he found that nothing untoward happened, that, indeed, the German Empire had never been more prosperous and peaceful than since he, Bismarck, had been relieved of his watch on deck; when, especially, he could no longer doubt that a new era of prosperity, calm, and absence of friction had begun, and that the country was now in hands more capable than his own, his fury knew

bounds no longer, and, blinded by rage, he belittled himself most lamentably in the eyes of the world by his open and vociferous threats, his so-called revelations, and his reckless but persistent incitements to schism.

Under all this insupportable provocation, William acted with a fortitude and a generosity which even his worst detractors cannot deny, for he steadfastly declined to sanction the slightest movement towards reprisals, treated covert insults and open insolence and affronts with serene indifference, and never by word or deed gave anybody the chance to see how deeply he was hurt.

Nor did his irresistible will, his defiant courage, or his fiery energy suffer any dimming by all he had then to undergo, while his calm remained quite unbroken. Outwardly unmoved, he watched the wild, unreasoning passion of the man he had just raised to so great estate wreak its worst, and not a finger did he lift to justify himself of the truly insane accusations launched both privately and publicly at his head.

Three years later continued rage and mortification culminated in a serious attack of illness, which very nearly carried the old Prince off for good and all. He could not have selected—had he wished to do so—a surer manner of bringing about an offer of reconciliation from his Sovereign, for no sooner did the Emperor hear of his critical condition than he hastened to hold out both hands to him, entreated him to accept one of the Royal palaces wherein to go and recuperate, and showered innumerable kindnesses and attentions upon him. All these warm-hearted advances and offers were, however, met with cold and formal rejection, and very few words were wasted on Bismarck's part over social conventions and courtly etiquette.

These two men had together witnessed strange events;

they had acted in concert, they had acted in direct opposition; the Emperor had broken Bismarck like a twig and Bismarck had spitefully revenged himself; and now, by a turn of the wheel, they were soon to find themselves face to face again, for when, in January, 1894, William II. celebrated at one and the same time his thirty-fifth birthday and the twenty-fifth anniversary of his admission to the army, he wrote a graciously worded "*manu-propria*" letter to Bismarck, in which he said that the Prince had tarried in seclusion long enough—too long, longer than he, the Emperor, would have wished him to do, and invited him in the warmest and most affectionate fashion to come to Berlin for the celebration. This letter was carried to Friedrichsruh by an Imperial aide-de-camp, and very sulkily the inwardly flattered old man consented at last to accept his Sovereign's invitation.

Hatred, contempt, bitterness, were thrust out of sight when the Prince, carrying high his bluff head, which, however, so clearly bespoke the storms still raging within, met Prince Henry, who had been sent by his Imperial brother to escort him, for even his hard heart could not but be touched, after a fashion, by the magnanimity displayed towards him.

Everything which could possibly be done to show him respect was done, all Berlin cheered him, and he must have been indeed difficult to satisfy had he discovered something lacking in this magnificent reception. He had, however, been so permanently ruffled by the swift disappearance of the obsequious crowds, when his power had been wiped away like writing off a slate, that nothing could ever quite soothe him again. He had not possessed a sufficiency of moral pluck to avoid playing a hopeless game, and employing cunning and spite as his last weapons. He knew that he had been

unworthy of his old self, and as he re-entered the capital, after so many years' absence, he glanced at the people in the streets curiously and sarcastically beneath his shaggy eyebrows. But when he met the Emperor he grew pale to the lips.

Never had William appeared to better advantage than on that occasion. There was a simple directness in his manner which conveyed the impression of purpose and of the habit of going straight to the point, very disconcerting to the ulcerated rancor of his guest. The Emperor did not rush into conversation with him, yet his silence had no embarrassment in it; and when, at last, he spoke, it was with so much feeling, quiet dignity, and almost filially forgiving affection that the wonder in the Prince's eyes deepened, and the embarrassment was his.

The meeting created an immense sensation. Bismarck was a man of whom people had spoken continually for many, many years. Two generations had found him a fruitful topic of conversation, without, it is true, greatly increasing their real knowledge of him, for he had always been and would always remain an unknown quantity; in one word, he had been typically the person from whom one expects something invariably surprising. But what aroused the unfeigned and spontaneous enthusiasm of the nation was the Emperor's magnanimity, his extraordinary self-control, the delicacy which prompted this conciliatory invitation, and the greatness of a soul capable of putting aside all personal feeling and all personal resentment, in order to honor and recognize, in spite of all that had passed since, the great services that had been rendered by this harsh, veteran statesman.

The ovations of which William, therefore, became the subject, during Bismarck's stay in Berlin, were some-

thing quite unheard of in the annals of a calm and ponderous people, and surprised as well as touched their Sovereign profoundly. Never had such cheers met his ear, never had such glowing, loyal eyes gazed up at him, never had his good Berlinese shouted themselves so abominably hoarse! The following quatrain sung throughout the city then may give a feeble idea of what was singing in every heart:

"Heil, Wilhelm, Dir und Segen!
Das hast du gut gemacht:
Auf allen deinen Wegen,
Dir sei ein Hoch gebracht!"

CHAPTER IX

Emperor William's fondness for travelling is well known. Indeed, there is no doubt that if, instead of being Germany's Sovereign Lord, the life of a mere private gentleman of ample means had fallen to his share, he would have been an inveterate globe-trotter. As it is, since he has ascended the Throne he has covered more miles by land and water than any of his brother Sovereigns, even those old enough to be grandfathers to him.

He had been on the Throne for less than four weeks when he started off from his capital to pay a state visit to Czar Alexander III.; thence he went to Denmark, Sweden and Norway, and a little later to Austria and Italy.

This was all done in 1888. In 1889, the young Emperor expressed a desire to see more of Norway, that land of long, silent twilights, bare crags, and mysterious fjords, where, comparatively speaking, so few journey. For the Emperor, as for that select number of people who admire nature even in her grimmest moods and under her gauntest aspect, Norway has an irresistible attraction. He had been enchanted by his first short sojourn there, and had by no means gazed his fill at the gray, hopeless cliffs, rising thousands of abrupt feet from the cold, transparent blue water, lapping their bases with scarcely a ripple of its chilling silkiness; at the distant snow-clad mountains glowing like pale phosphorescent rubies in the vague light of the midnight sun; or

the deep, gloomy gorges enclosing narrow borders of sombre pine and silver-birch, that harmoniously mingle their heterogeneous branches; or, in short, at all that goes so far to make up the peculiarly stern charm of this lonely corner of the world.

Therefore, as soon as spring had given place to early summer, the Imperial yacht "*Hohenzollern*" left Kiel, to convey for the first time a German Emperor to the confines of Europe and the sad-hued shores of the Polar Sea.

Few steamers ever churned the still, icy waters where the "*Hohenzollern*" ventured; certainly none of such exquisite neatness and elegance as that Imperial toy, had ever cast the white-and-gold reflections of immaculate awnings and polished copper-fittings, across the mirroring shade thrown by the bleak and dismal precipices of that chaotic region. But William II. does nothing superficially; he had determined to become intimately acquainted with Norway, and intimately acquainted with it he became.

I have alluded at the beginning of this volume to the Emperor's fondness for fishing. As soon as he reached the dreary magnificence of the fjords, he may be described as having lived in brogues, wet waders, soaking outer-socks, tweeds, and a gray cloth hat drawn sharply down over the eyes. Every morning with untiring energy and unfailing delight, carrying his own creel and rod like the true sportsman he is, he sailed in a cockle-shell of a dinghy down the fjords to some distant trout-stream or boisterous river, bounding noisily towards the silent sea over cruel-toothed, jutting rocks, or tumbling in a series of roaring waterfalls into great pools, which it roughened and clamorously broke into menacing little waves.

No weather deterred him, and even when the sunshine,

which works so beautiful a transformation in Arctic landscapes, hid its countenance behind gray palls of falling dampness that drew a gloomy twilight around the glaciers, he invariably went off in the highest spirits to pursue the treacherous trout in its wellnigh inaccessible haunts. On and on, regardless of peaty pool and swift-tearing brooklet, he followed the glistening, scarcely visible track leading to the coveted spots where the fish lie head up-stream, with their ravenous, ferocious-looking mouths half-open to chance provender, as if awaiting the barbed fly attached to the taut Imperial line.

The Emperor was enchanted. Never did he get tired of the quick, nervous burr-r-r-r of the reel, of the sudden bending of the rod with its promise of an extraordinary catch, of the delicious cosiness of the "*Hohenzollern's*" saloon when, tired and wet through, after a long day's sport, he sat down to dinner at the luxuriously fitted table dazzlingly set with snowy napery, bright silver, fragrant flowers, and sparkling crystal, and which formed so pleasing a contrast to the fine, cold rain falling overhead on the yacht's white decks, or the freezing wind of the polar night blowing across the fjords.

Yet pleasure was, after all, with him but a "*Nebensache*," a rare oasis within a desert of duty, to be indulged in but seldom, and his travels have always had a more important aim than either pleasure or political interests. Indeed, as he himself wrote:

"In my travels, which have, perchance, been misinterpreted, I have not only sought to visit foreign lands and study foreign statesmanship, or to cultivate friendly relations with neighboring realms, but having recognized the immense value of the perspective which distance lends to one's view of party feuds and party prejudices, I have looked upon these travels as necessary periods of rest, during which I am enabled to put many things to

STEERING HIS BOAT IN THE FJORDS

the proof. Whoever has communed with himself when alone on the high seas, with naught but God's star-broidered heavens above, cannot be blind to the infinite worth of such moments. That is why I desired to live through these hours, during which the heart can seek its own counsel and the mind call itself to account for what it has striven to accomplish, and the way in which it has striven, since they are the best of cures for over self-confidence, and, as such, a benefit to any human being."

Norway must in that respect have been absolutely perfect, for its very atmosphere seems so impregnated with a sort of solemn isolation, that nothing can ever tarnish its unworldliness. In the extreme purity of its air anxious doubts, treacherous feelings of one's own worthlessness, are soon laid to rest. The unreal, strained ways of civilization are left far behind, and when a new day dawns upon the land that has known no night, when the great snow-fields peeping above the rocky crags which border the shores, begin to glow with the pearly light of morning, the heart and soul feel astonishingly refreshed by the crystalline silence of the hours of sweet repose and meditation, which have just closed.

There, far away from railways and the noise of haste and traffic, one does not seem to long for the busy life of great cities, and quietude soon follows on excitement or weariness without any great mental effort being necessary.

It is well to bear in mind that Emperor William II. was already, in 1889, unusually heavily burdened. Indeed, one is tempted to say that his position was unique in this respect for a man of his age. His grasp of most subjects was extraordinarily minute and profound. In military and naval matters his faculties, for instance, were remarkable. From the lock of a rifle to the con-

struction of a trench, from the strap of a campaigning saddle and the details of a treaty, to the loading and sponging of a field-artillery piece, the furling of a sail, or the management of a torpedo-boat, the extent of his knowledge was practically unrivalled. In diplomacy and statecraft he had already made his mark, and his slightest word and action had been dictated by motives that had their birth in a punctilious sense of honor and a deep and scrupulous uprightness.

Truly he was no trifler, but went right to the very heart of everything he undertook, with a completeness which took one's breath away. Nor had the sorrows and trials of the past two years as yet faded away from his remembrance. He was outwardly little changed, but the wounds inflicted then were by no means healed. No doubt the great healer, Time, would yet do for him what it does more or less for all of us—but it was still too soon for that, and in his courage he seemed to take pride and pleasure in facing untoward difficulties, indeed, he ordinarily sought them—but during this first long sojourn in Norway he gave himself leisure at last to see the brighter objects of his life stand out more firmly and brilliantly against the sombre veils of the past, and gazed at them with eyes that clearly saw and understood.

Almost every year since then, the slim, graceful hull of the "*Hohenzollern*" has swung into view of the silent, solitary fjords, whither its Imperial owner comes in search of those quiet hours which are a medicine to his energetic, busy, tireless spirit. Then old questions are brought to life again, unfinished plans are reassumed, careful "*examens de conscience*" are gone through in a practical, far-sighted way, and the kindly heart and active spirit commune with each other alone, with remarkably good results for the welfare of William's subjects,

as is exemplified by the many things that are accomplished when he returns, buoyant and strengthened in body and mind, and with an ever wider and braver conception of life.

In ordinary times William II. has a strange trick of lapsing into sudden stony silences, invariably followed by the raising of some deep, abstract question, or the solution of some difficulty of more than usual magnitude. There is a strange mixture of strength and gentleness, courage and resignation, indefatigable energy and brooding philosophy at play during those silent moments, which is utterly incomprehensible to most, but well known to a very few.

Of course, the Emperor's rapid journeys from one end of Europe to the other caused much comment of an ill-natured character. Other Monarchs stayed at home, why did not he? What need was there of his flying about like a Cabinets-Courier or a commercial traveller, desecrating his lofty functions by actually signing State papers and Imperial documents in a railway-carriage swallowing up seventy miles an hour? Such restlessness was surely on a par with his usual eccentricities! Was he in a fair way to become irretrievably "*non compos mentis*"? Such a love of excitement was decidedly a very grave sign of mental perturbation, and should be checked if possible. This was the clear and decisive view taken by the public of these Imperial journeys, and was expressed with a half-pitying, half-contemptuous, and wholly alarmed jerk of the head or the pen.

The trouble was that His Majesty William II. certainly left a great deal unsaid about his travels, which this babbling world of ours expected him to confide to it. And being disappointed, it naturally revenged itself!

One self-deception leads to another, and when it be-

came known, some years later, that Germany's Emperor was about to undertake a trip to Palestine, the world found itself enriched by the full and perfect conviction that a spectacular pageant of a religious and devotional character was the Sovereign's chief object. Indeed, a great many very remarkable articles appeared in the foreign press dealing with the "*Protestant Pope William*" and his ambitions, with a free-and-easy display of ignorance which was intensely refreshing. It is a well-known fact that for the press it is always clear light, whatever the time of day or night, winter or summer, peace or war, thanks to an unsparing use of imagination. There is no fear of its readers being left behind the times. On the contrary, they — for the trifling expenditure of a small coin or two—are always carried far ahead even of probabilities.

Emperor William was going to Jerusalem *via* Constantinople—this was strictly true—but he was supposed to conceal under this after all perfectly harmless and natural desire of visiting the Holy Sepulchre, a more than insatiable ambition. This was not true at all, and in this instance the "*revelations*" of the press were not markedly convincing. They cannot always be that! At any rate, the public was justified in believing that the "*pretext*" of the voyage—the consecration of the "*Heiland's Kirche*" at Jerusalem—was correctly stated, for the Emperor was really going to be present at that ceremony.

Jerusalem! A magical word, which conjures up visions of a glorious past, unchanging for centuries, a word which appeals to one's imagination, makes one dream of the dim, mysterious light of great silent temples, and fills one's soul with an overwhelming feeling of awe and of wonder—Jerusalem! which "*civilization*," with its dreary procession of empty-headed, chattering tourists,

its levelling theories, its noise and its ghastly search after improvement, has, of late years, touched with sacrilegious fingers.

Judge what Emperor William's feelings must have been when he stood before this grand old city, this splendid relic of the immemorial past, and realized that, as far as was feasible, all the remaining "*couleur locale*" had been rubbed off to do him honor!

Grand and terrible was the old Jerusalem, impressive and mystical the untouched portions of it are yet to those who wander there alone and stumble by chance, as it were, upon what is left intact. But it must have been a bitter disappointment to travel all the way from Germany in order to inhale the spirit of long ago, and to find that the great gateways, the tortuous, dark lanes, the gaunt, crumbling thoroughfares, and narrow "*chemins-de-ronde*" draped in golden lichens, had alike been emptied of their customary denizens, that the picturesque forms of Arab, Jew, negro, and Levantine, clad in the artistic tangle of multicolored rags or the magnificence of Oriental costumes, had been swept from the paths where they wend all day and all night their shrouded way, and the grim old city purged of all its character in order to make room for the Imperial cortège.

Europe seemed to the Emperor very far distant, as together with the Empress he landed at Haifa; the echo of its shrill clamor had died away upon the oily blue waves he was leaving behind, the hurry of its conflicts, the fuss of its restless inhabitants could be forgotten for a time, and now he, the great Sovereign who had travelled so many miles to worship at the Saviour's tomb, would be able to plunge himself heart and soul into an epoch which is of so vital an interest for the Christian world.

He was now in a country where the very moss upon

the house-tops is of secular antiquity, where the ways of the people who live beneath them are scarcely less so, and, as he took possession of his camp beneath the crumbling walls of the great Christian Mecca, and gazed at it in the glory of a violet and gold sunset, he was evidently deeply impressed and moved. But when he turned his horse's head towards the city so often drenched with the blood of Christian and infidel alike, what a shock his sensibilities must have endured — although he very carefully and considerately concealed the fact. Many great and successful careers have been based upon this simple practice of self-control.

The extravagant preparations made for the entrance of the German Sovereigns into Jerusalem were undoubtedly the outcome of excellent intentions, but when it comes to the mathematical grading and levelling of eminently picturesque roads, the partial pulling down of a venerable and twenty-times historical wall, and the scouring and whitewashing of the Jaffa-gate and of David's Tower, it takes considerable self-control for a man possessed, like Emperor William, of a reverential and artistic mind to compel himself to smile gratefully.

M. de Mirbach, one of the chroniclers of the Imperial pilgrimage, remarks that Jerusalem was on that day as neat and dainty as a bonbon box! Ye Gods! A bonbon box! Could anything be more atrociously "*fin de siècle*"?

Indeed, the whole pilgrimage was the most extraordinary thing of the kind ever witnessed, thanks to the meddlesome interference of people who, fearing lest the Imperial couple should lack creature comforts and modern luxuries, succeeded in replacing by a glaring and vulgar up-to-dateness beggaring all description, all the romance and antique glamour they—the Emperor and Empress—thirsted for.

Had the Emperor's plans for this "*Imperial Crusade*"

been followed scrupulously, its success would have been a foregone conclusion, for he is "*artiste jusqu'au bout des ongles*," and, moreover, sincerely and profoundly reverential—an excellent combination under such circumstances—but, alas! in these democratic days the first and foremost thought is to get one's money's worth out of any enterprise, and the organizers of this journey to Palestine were so eager to procure for their Imperial patron his full money's worth that they lamentably overdid things.

Moreover, the modern human being never quite purges his mind of the instinct commercial, and it therefore goes without saying that the costliness of the occasion was strained to its uttermost capacities. There are a very few people in this world who can read a person's mind by the mere flicker of an eyelid, a glance, a silence of a few seconds, or any other such trivial sign, in preference to judging by the spoken word; but as there happened to be one or two such keen observers in the Emperor's train, even the unalterable good-humor and smiling resignation to the "*fait accompli*" displayed by that august personage did not quite succeed in entirely concealing his very natural disappointment.

His entrance into Jerusalem was impressive, in spite of these meddlesome organizers, for mounted on a superb white palfrey and wearing a snowy mantle, the long folds of which fell in simple, noble lines about him, he looked every inch of him a Crusader King. But the "*Wacht am Rhein*," shrilly rendered by the brass bands of the Turkish escort, seemed curiously out of place in those quaint old thoroughfares, where the "*Allah Akbar*" of the true believers resounds like a great, plaintive moan of prayer, rising and falling solemnly, to be re-echoed from the very house-tops and to die away with infinite melancholy at the very threshold of the Catholic fanes,

whence low, Latin chants, impressive and nerve-shaking, filter into the dry, resonant air.

These are the melodies echoing down the centuries, which make all Jerusalem murmurous with one orison arising at one and the same time from the two antagonistic camps, Christian and Moslem, with equal fervor, but the martial strains of brass instruments played by the neat, trim, and thoroughly modernized soldiers of the Sultan, who contemptuously designate the Holy Sepulchre as "*el Komamah*" (that filth) certainly created a lamentable dissonance.

Nor after sundown, when William sank humbly upon his knees to pray fervently in the dusky gardens of Gethsemane, did the vague outline of the great city, with its palaces of dead Kings rising up one behind the other, their crowding roofs, grim and gray with the wash of rains and the storms of ages, stretching away into the dim distance, the creviced towers over-topping other towers, and the silent, oppressive crenellations of the grand sweep of wall, suggest the magnificent banquet cooked by French chefs "*di-primo-cartello*" and drenched with champagne of the very costliest mark, waiting there for this Imperial pilgrim.

Black and menacing in the sinister light of a redly rising moon, the ancient city towered, and, wrapped in his cloak, careless now of jarring contrasts, impenetrable, and with thoughts and heart concentrated, the Emperor knelt on the bare ground, the old Jerusalem alone looming large before his vision, drawing nearer, moving towards him, first slowly, then quickly, then in a rush of overpowering feeling, the centuries slipping from him like a mantle, and leaving him but an awed and humble worshipper.

This same spirit of revocation permeated him when he walked on the Mount of Olives, received the Holy

Communion in the "*Coenaculum*," attended the consecration of the Church of the Holy Saviour, and travelled by road from Jerusalem to Damascus. The incongruities of the "*personally conducted tourist's trip*" no longer grated upon him, for his ardent faith blotted out all the exasperating false notes which marred this grand, religious symphony.

Slowly he rode between endless fields of velvety barley, such as those in which the Founder of Christianity had passed with his disciples; walked his horse across wide strips of Palestine irises and asphodels, gazing abstractedly at the plumes of distant palms or the groups of dark olives showing against the faint dead turquoise blue of the horizon line.

From the gray walls of the antique buildings, from the flower-filled plain, nay, even from the brilliant dust dancing beneath his charger's feet, the all-pervading chant of the Past rose and declined continuously in an arc of sound and of blinding magnificence, which nothing could dim and which made his whole being throb exultantly. All the intuitions of his at times singularly mystical mind came to his aid and brought him imperishable solace. His eyes roamed upon the great plain, level as a sea, that stretched away to right and to left until the distinct, somewhat harsh color of its flower and barley patches merged into one soft, shimmering, amethystine hue.

Why had this "*restless*" Emperor gone to Palestine? The question had been launched by sharp, challenging voices, and scratched sourly by many acerated pens throughout Europe.

Why? For this! Just for this, ye vindictive and jealous apostles of curiosity! And his aim was now accomplished.

Such a statement may seem strange to a crowd which,

hankering after music of the dancing-hall type, suddenly hears a melodious symphony played by a master-hand —yes, strange and unpleasant, like any other truth.

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Usually, when either at home or abroad, the amount of labor Emperor William accomplishes in a day is without parallel. During his sojourn in Constantinople he had fairly bewildered the languid Orientals by his unconquerable energy and his indefatigable vitality, but this journey to Palestine was a time apart, during which the dreamer within him had full play, instead of being, as usual, repressed and denied; and really, whatever gibes and stings the world might afterwards dispense about the histrionic proclivities and melodramatic "*penchants*" of this particular Crusader, they would be trifling and unimportant compared with the treasure of freshly gathered delight thus acquired.

Similar sneers have been levelled at his self-assumed role of "*Summus Episcopus*" of the Lutheran Church throughout his Empire, although, strictly speaking, his supremacy in the State Church of his Realm is just as logical as that of the Muscovite and British Sovereigns.

Is he not by right of inheritance a titular Bishop and Archbishop, some twenty times over, since his ancestors when annexing small States and Sovereignties invariably obtained the Mitre with the Crown and the Crozier with the Sceptre? For it will be remembered that many petty German States in the Middle-Ages were ruled by Bishops and Archbishops possessing Sovereign rank, their ecclesiastical dignity being inherent to their estates as Rulers.

Moreover, the objections presented to William's recognition as Supreme Head of the Lutheran Church, on the plea that that branch of Christianity is not confined to

his dominions, are absurd, for Greek Catholicism is by no means limited by the boundaries of the Czar's dominions, and there is a large Anglican body in the United States, which patent facts do not prevent the Emperor of All The Russias and the English King from being hereditary "*Summi Episcopi*" within their respective countries. So there, also, the public is inclined to desperately exaggerate a perfectly legitimate idea into yet another proof of inordinate and unbearable ambition.

Another most amusing error is that engendered by the conspicuous position on the wall of William's study at Potsdam of the copy of a genealogical tree presented by Queen Victoria, and the original of which is at Windsor Castle. Since in this document a descent is traced by way of the English Royal line to Heremon, an ancient King of Ulster, and thence back to King David through Heremon's wife—a mythical Princess of Israel—it has been currently stated that the Emperor prides himself greatly on belonging to the same family as Christ.

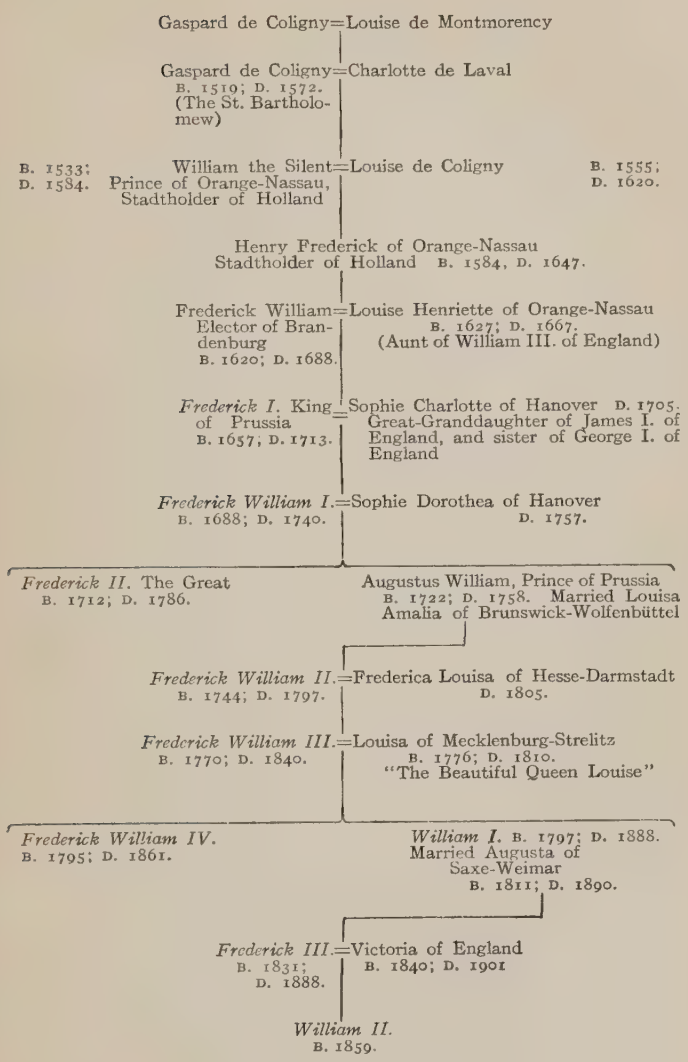
It is really incredible that it should be necessary to explain that this pedigree—at least the Hebrew part of it—is nothing more than an interesting relic of the feudal ages, when coats of arms were devised for such doubtful cavaliers as Achilles and Hector, and when the title of Abraham, Moses, and Aaron to be considered "*gentlemen*" was gravely affirmed by such enthusiasts as that veracious lady, Juliana Berners, who, moreover, speaks of the "*gentilman Jesus. . . very God and man; after his manhode King of the londe of Jude and of Jewes, gentilman by his moder Mary, prynce of cote armure.*"

There is, however, a descent of which Emperor William is very proud—and with justice—that from those heroic men, Gaspard de Coligny, Admiral of France, who was slain in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and William the Silent, Prince of Orange-Nassau, the Lib-

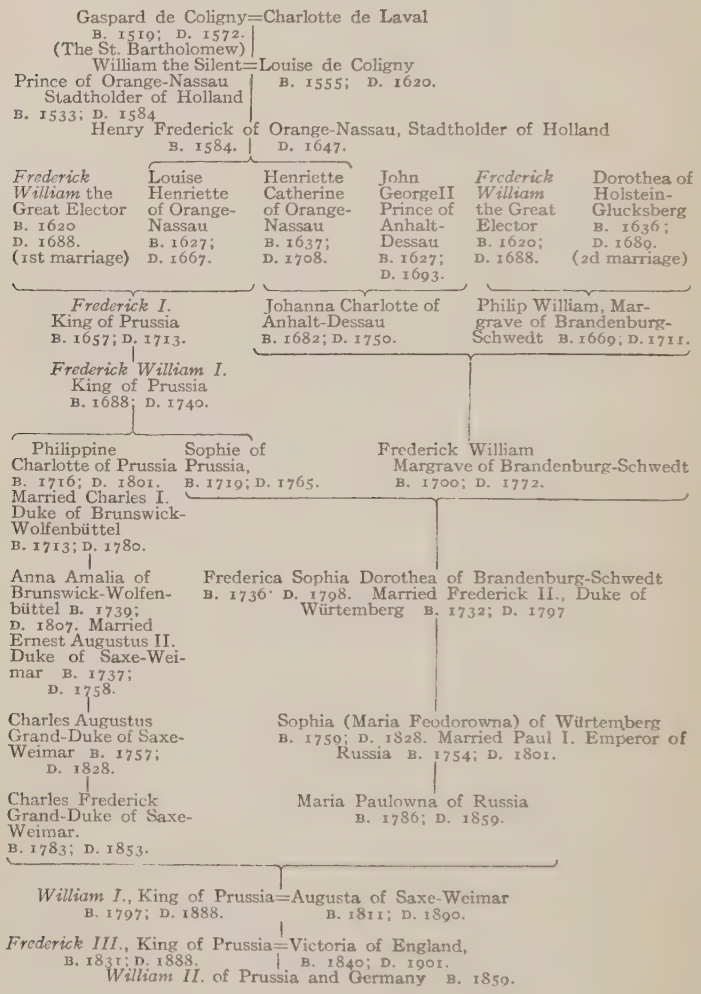
erator of the Netherlands. This descent, by reason of which the Prussian Crown possesses the title of "Prince of Orange"—an extinct principality in the heart of France—and a right to the Throne of Holland, according to the legitimistic point of view, greater than that of Queen Wilhelmina, may be traced by no less than three lines, one being the direct line of the Prussian Kings, and the other two those of the parents of the late Empress-Dowager Augusta of Saxe-Weimar.

Gaspard, Duc de Coligny, was born February 16, 1517, at the ancestral seat of his family, the Château de Châtillon-sur-Loing, in what is now the Department of Loiret, son of Gaspard, Duc de Coligny, Marshal and Peer of France, and Louise de Montmorency. He married Charlotte de Laval, and their daughter, Louise de Coligny, born in 1555, married first Charles de Téligny, who perished with his father-in-law in the St. Bartholomew, and afterwards, at Antwerp, in 1583, William the Silent. Their granddaughter, Louise Henriette of Orange-Nassau, aunt of William III. of England and Holland, married, in 1646, Frederick William the Great, Elector of Brandenburg, the eleventh Prince of his line since the year 1415, when the Emperor Sigismund, in return for aid that raised him to the Imperial Throne, conferred the electoral dignity upon the powerful Burggraves of Nuremberg, who prior to 1191 had been the hard-fighting Swabian Counts of Hohenzollern. Their son, Frederick, was the first King of Prussia.

Or perhaps a chart states the matter more plainly:


Gaspard de Coligny=Louise de Montmorency
Gaspard de Coligny=Charlotte de Laval
B. 1519; D. 1572.
(The St. Bartholomew)
B. 1533; D. 1584. William the Silent=Louise de Coligny B. 1555; D. 1620.
Prince of Orange-Nassau, Stadtholder of Holland
Henry Frederick of Orange-Nassau
Stadtholder of Holland B. 1584, D. 1647.
Frederick William=Louise Henriette of Orange-Nassau
Elector of Brandenburg B. 1627; D. 1667.
B. 1620; D. 1688. (Aunt of William III. of England)
Frederick I. King=Sophie Charlotte of Hanover D. 1705.
of Prussia Great-Granddaughter of James I. of
B. 1657; D. 1713. England, and sister of George I. of
England
Frederick William I.=Sophie Dorothea of Hanover
B. 1688; D. 1740. D. 1757.
Frederick II. The Great
B. 1712; D. 1786.
Augustus William, Prince of Prussia
B. 1722; D. 1758. Married Louisa
Amalia of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel
Frederick William II.=Frederica Louisa of Hesse-Darmstadt
B. 1744; D. 1797. D. 1805.
Frederick William III.=Louisa of Mecklenburg-Strelitz
B. 1770; D. 1840. B. 1776; D. 1810.
"The Beautiful Queen Louise"
Frederick William IV.
B. 1795; D. 1861.
William I. B. 1797; D. 1888.
Married Augusta of
Saxe-Weimar
B. 1811; D. 1890.
Frederick III.=Victoria of England
B. 1831; B. 1840; D. 1901
D. 1888.
William II.
B. 1859.

And as regards the two lines of descent through Augusta of Saxe-Weimar,


Gaspard de Coligny=Charlotte de Laval
B. 1519; D. 1572.
(The St. Bartholomew)
William the Silent=Louise de Coligny
Prince of Orange-Nassau
Stadtholder of Holland
B. 1533; D. 1584
B. 1555; D. 1620.
Henry Frederick of Orange-Nassau, Stadtholder of Holland
B. 1584. D. 1647.
Frederick William the Great Elector B. 1620 D. 1688. (1st marriage)
Louise Henriette of Orange-Nassau B. 1627; D. 1667.
Henriette Catherine of Orange-Nassau B. 1637; D. 1708.
John GeorgeII Prince of Anhalt-Dessau B. 1627; D. 1693.
Frederick William the Great Elector B. 1620; D. 1688.
Dorothea of Holstein-Glucksberg B. 1636; D. 1689. (2d marriage)
Frederick I. King of Prussia B. 1657; D. 1713.
Johanna Charlotte of Anhalt-Dessau B. 1682; D. 1750.
Philip William, Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt B. 1669; D. 1711.
Frederick William I. King of Prussia B. 1688; D. 1740.
Philippine Charlotte of Prussia B. 1716; D. 1801. Married Charles I. Duke of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel B. 1713; D. 1780.
Sophie of Prussia, B. 1719; D. 1765.
Frederick William Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt B. 1700; D. 1772.
Anna Amalia of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel B. 1739; D. 1807. Married Ernest Augustus II. Duke of Saxe-Weimar B. 1737; D. 1758.
Frederica Sophia Dorothea of Brandenburg-Schwedt B. 1736 D. 1798. Married Frederick II., Duke of Würtemberg B. 1732; D. 1797
Charles Augustus Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar B. 1757; D. 1828.
Sophia (Maria Feodorowna) of Würtemberg B. 1750; D. 1828. Married Paul I. Emperor of Russia B. 1754; D. 1801.
Charles Frederick Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar. B. 1783; D. 1853.
Maria Paulowna of Russia B. 1786; D. 1859.
William I., King of Prussia=Augusta of Saxe-Weimar
B. 1797; D. 1888. B. 1811; D. 1890.
Frederick III., King of Prussia=Victoria of England,
B. 1831; D. 1888. B. 1840; D. 1901.
William II. of Prussia and Germany B. 1859.

Slow of movement, slow of speech, the Teutons are reputed to be; but although most excessively Teuton in heart and soul, as well as in most other respects, Emperor William is not slow by any means, neither is he taciturn. On the contrary, although he is the busiest man in his Empire, he yet finds time for everything, even for occasional amusement, and amusement with him is synonymous with all things pertaining to sport.

Fishing-rods, spiteful-looking hooks, and all other paraphernalia belonging to the perfect angler's outfit, are far from being His Majesty's chief toys, for shooting, hunting, riding, canoeing, swimming—nay, polo, tennis, and dancing, besides many other lighter branches of sport—if one may give that name to a somewhat heterogeneous list—claim their fair share of his wide-awake and remarkably intelligent interest.

There are among these manifold above-mentioned branches some wherein a certain mechanical portion of the brain is sufficient to guide and inspire the hand, leaving the remainder free for other work — the steering of a ship, for instance, and even the handling of a whistling trout-line — although ardent fishermen will probably anathematize me for pronouncing such a heresy. But big-game shooting emphatically does not belong to that order of things; its extermination must needs be transacted by the help of the whole amount of mother-wit one is blessed with, I do assure you, and big-game shooting is one of William's favorite pastimes.

A great Northern forest in winter is one of nature's most magnificent efforts towards perfection—indeed, the beauty of such a scene grips one positively by the throat. Trackless, motionless, virginal, the huge expanse of upright pine-trunks and immaculate snow stretch before

the wandering eyes of the hunters, and a sort of infectious silence—

"So white and still, fur 's you can look or listen,"

broken only by the miniature avalanches caused by the dip of a heavily laden branch beneath the light touch of a white willow-grouse, or a whirling snipe in the summits of the trees emitting its warning note, gives one almost the impression of standing in a sacred place.

This feeling, of course, departs when one remembers that the chief reason of one's presence is the quest of bears, wolves, black-game, capercailzie or ptarmigan, and is replaced — especially when the weird, hopeless howl of the wolves strikes one's ears—by a sensation distinctly the reverse of solemn!

William II. is passionately fond of hunting in winter, when the icy wind whispers and gurgles in the pines, when the air is thin like spun-crystal, exhilarating like a draught of champagne, and sends the blood coursing through one's veins with a surprising "*joie de vivre*."

A strange, popular delusion is that he likes the grotesque and "*bourgeois*" mode of shooting young boars bereft of their tusks at a pitifully tender age and driven like sheep towards him from their pens in the "*Saugarten*." That, like all other popular delusions of which he is the subject, is quite untrue. Germany's Emperor is far too much of a man to enjoy so tame a sport. Although when timid guests flock around him he grudgingly consents to take part in such butchery—a traditional form of entertainment — yet, for himself, he prefers more difficult forms of woodland hunting, especially since being an extraordinarily good shot, and versed in all forest-craft, the ruses of the furred and

RETURNING FROM A CHAMOIS HUNT

feathered denizens of his boundless pine-woods are but an additional attraction.

He is remarkably learned in the ways and customs of big game, and to him there is nothing comparable to the joy of outwitting those ponderous brutes which tread so silently and stealthily through the snow-white clearings, to gain, unperceived if possible, the bluish depths of the surrounding thickets. The distant cries of small birds, the far-off warning of a wolf, are quickly and easily interpreted by his practised ear, and, clad in fur-lined clothes, he loves to stand alone in a woodman's refuge, one rifle across his arm, another near to hand, watching through the interlaced branches the approach of a gaunt "Gray Brother" lurching from cover with an evil grin on his snarling lips, the silent skimming of a grouse over the open space, or the shambling of a grumbling, growling bear, furious at having been disturbed and hunted from his lair by the beaters.

When not awakened from their long winter's sleep, these bears are not particularly ferocious, but when they have been forced to relinquish the warm cosiness of their comfortable quarters, that is quite another affair, for they suddenly become adversaries worthy of the best steel.

At those moments there is a singular gleam in William's eyes which is not due to the mere excitement of a sportsman, and which one may notice there every time he is confronted by some difficulty which he is eager to conquer. His whole attitude and manner indicate a complete mastery of the situation; there is a strong, calm, and essentially manly air about him, through which the unlimited power of an unconquerable will is apparent; physically also he has the litheness which one finds in many Germans who have taken their degree at one of their great Universities, for the

German students are the finest gymnasts in the world, and muscle once made is there to stay.

His exquisite little Castle of Letzlingen is, in my humble opinion, the gem of the collection of similar Imperial and Royal hunting-boxes throughout Europe. After the great autumnal military manœuvres have come to an end, Emperor William usually begins the sporting season by going to Rominten, his shooting-box on the Romintener-Heide, which is situated in the district of Gumbinnen, in East Prussia, and surrounded by some seventy or eighty square miles of forest-land. The heath itself is not like the barren, unprofitable Scottish moors, dreary and monotonous beyond compare, nor the wind-blown, rock-strewn "*Landes*" of Brittany, rendered so infinitely gorgeous by the dazzling gold of fiercely armored whin-bushes, the delicate pink and white and deep purple of the heather, and the rich yellow of innumerable genestas, but is a very different sort of country, covered with dense pine-woods of quite savage grandeur, carpeted with thick mosses and intersected by fern-bordered rivulets. There the Emperor often rides far and fast among the splendid trees and out on the broad turf roads, closed in with a dewy veil of greenery, which the approaching autumn begins to tint lightly with flecks of ruby and topaz.

The house itself is an idealized double chalet, very roomy and comfortable, planted on a green lawn belted by larches, beeches, and walnut-trees, which cluster gracefully around some tall, dark-needled Siberian pines. Close to it rises the slender spire of the quaint little chapel of St. Hubert, patron of the chase, where the religious services are conducted by a Court Chaplain during the Emperor's sojourns. The Kaiser is certainly one of St. Hubert's most fervent devotees, and invariably wears around his neck, when in hunting-dress, the

broad green ribbon of the St. Hubert's Order, inscribed with the words "*Vivent le Roy et ses chasseurs*," from which depends a swiftly racing stag exquisitely wrought in silver and surmounted by a Royal Crown and a cluster of acorns.

From Rominten the Emperor goes on to Hubertustock, another of the Imperial "*Jagdreviers*," which is celebrated for the plentifulness of its red deer.

On November 3d, the "*Hübertusjagd*" (St. Hubert's Hunt) takes place in the "*Grünewald*" near Berlin, an occasion of much display, to witness which from one hundred and fifty to two hundred invitations are yearly issued; and, finally, towards the end of November, the indefatigable Imperial Nimrod arrives at Schloss Letzlingen, which in former days used to be known by the name of "*Hirschburg*" (the Castle of Stags).

It was built in 1560 by Kurprinz Johann George von Brandenburg, who was also a passionate disciple of the great St. Hubert, and is a delicious bit of Gothic architecture, embowered by century-old oaks. There is a tower-flanked and crenellated wall surrounding the Castle, at the foot of which a broad moat does duty as a mirror to reflect the tiny turrets and machicolations crowning the massive barbican.

The Emperor's room is the most picturesque and covetable one can imagine. A dark tapestry covers the walls, and the ceiling is formed by aged and mellowed oak-beams. It is lighted at night by sconces and a magnificent hanging "*Lustre*" made from the antlers of stags killed on the estate, and before the carved writing-desk is a gigantic arm-chair, the legs, arms, and headrest of which are formed of the great curved horns of the long-vanished and extinct red cattle.

Every self-respecting writer must prate of the interior of houses or palaces—as the case may be—interiors

which are more or less alike all the world over, for costly draperies, beautiful pictures, inlaid furniture, and magnificent carpets are the same between any four walls; but still, after all, the foot that treads the carpets, the hand looping up the draperies, and the brain planning the "*tout ensemble*" make them differ in some essential points, for whether the description above decried be that of a castle or a hovel, it still must be the human being that lends the interest to the cocoon he inhabits.

William II. was born with a talent to produce the best effects in any of the places he lives in, the best that are to be obtained from the materials at hand, and when those do not suffice, his purse is sufficiently long and his taste sufficiently great to remedy, promptly, whatever is lacking. Indeed, the room I am attempting to describe is, from the square polychrome stove in the corner to the trifles littering the writing-table, perfect. Through the tapestry one divines the outline of the square-hewn blocks of granite of which the Schloss is built; there are wild-flowers in shallow bowls on low, heavy tables, deep-curtained windows, massive chairs, a wonderful rug or two, and on the walls some remarkable water-colors and a quantity of trophies of the chase, including admirably mounted antlered heads of "*Royals*," queer lynx faces grinning evilly, wild boars with protruding tusks, and bears and wolves with sparkling crystal eyes as bright as if still full of life.

Among the many curios to be seen at Letzlingen is an old goblet cunningly fastened between the points of a pair of giant antlers. It is only possible to drink therefrom by squeezing one's face between these points, which for rotund people is a difficult achievement. It is a custom for every one of the Emperor's guests to be put through this odd performance, in order to thus absorb a pint bottle of champagne at one draught, to the

health of the Imperial host, and loud and merry is the laughter when some clumsy or embarrassed person comes to grief and spills the contents upon himself.

The Emperor is a dead shot, his aim being almost absolutely unerring. Elks have fallen victims to his gun in Sweden, bears in Russia and in Hungary—besides those killed on his own lands — reindeer in Norway, chamois in the Tyrol, and several "Aurochsen"—those fierce wild cattle now almost extinct—in the private domains of the Czar, not to mention boars, wolves, stags, deer, and innumerable birds of all sizes, species, and degrees of rarity, in every corner of Europe. To terminate this list worthily, it is only necessary to mention the two or three whales which he shot with a harpoon-gun during his Far-Northern trips.

It is, perchance, at Rominten, however, that William enjoys the shooting he likes best, since, as it is situated in close proximity to the Russian frontier, there is an abundance of wolves and of big game in the surrounding forests.

When the snow falls softly and steadily, as it falls in those regions, filling the whole atmosphere with a fine, brilliant, icy powder, which drifts constantly, restlessly, in soft, broad waves like those of an ocean, the Emperor drives his sleigh to the great, silent woods, as fast as horses can lay hoof to the frozen surface of the intervening roads. He takes the numbing wind which tears and howls down straight from the North as a matter of course, and with the composure that comes of long experience, holds the reins and handles them after the fashion of Russian Yémschiks, for he has a singular knack of adapting himself almost unconsciously to his surroundings. The certain knowledge that at any moment the horses may plunge into a drift and that such an accident is sometimes fraught with considerable danger, when the

thermometer merrily hovers between twenty and thirty, or even forty degrees below freezing-point, leaves him quite undisturbed, for a Sovereign who constantly and cheerfully runs the danger of assassination does not rate the value of his life very high. Moreover, he has that delight in battling with the elements which is a peculiarity of all strong men and a few—a very few—small women, who in their inferior way are strong too!

As a rider Emperor William is equally skilled: he rides like an Austrian—encomium can go no further. His horses are the best that money can purchase, and a finer judge of equine qualities never stood in a pair of perfectly fitting riding-boots. Passionately devoted to "*terrain*" riding, it is a pleasure to see him negotiate tall fences and broad water-jumps with the rapidity, security, and neatness of a professional, and without even putting an iron astray.

Generally speaking, he and his hunters are equally keen on going, and the pair of them move at a headlong gallop, which does a connoisseur's heart good to witness.

In the hunting-field he is often in absolutely boyish spirits, sitting squarely in his saddle, hands well down, and blue eyes dancing with excitement, while he faces every obstacle indiscriminately, and goes over all, whether they be high or wide, as if leaping mere potato-furrows.

All sorts of marvellous escapes from harm are in the day's-work with him, cross-country or otherwise. In his pink coat he is the picture of a horseman, his horses are always pictures, too, and horse and rider sail away at the tail of the pack without thrust or flurry, but with unimpeachable judgment and determination on the part of the latter, and extraordinary speed and endurance on that of the former, a combination of felici-

tious circumstances which fills the expert on-lookers with delight.

He has a foolish way, too, of getting fond of horses—I commit the deliberate "*lèse-majesté*" of saying "*foolish*" because this warm love of animals adds only to the many heart-breaks life's treacheries keep in store for us. A consolation it is often, to be sure; but taken all in all, the tenderness which one feels for horses and dogs is prone to make one undergo many stripes, for one can sometimes feel almost frantic pain at the loss of one of those four-footed friends, whose unswerving loyalty and absolute devotion are never at fault, as is the case with so many two-footed ones.

The Emperor enjoys few things better than to go with his family for a few weeks' stay on his estate of Kadinen, a beautiful place where blooded cattle are bred, and where agronomy is carried on as behooves a model farm. The whole establishment is kept in apple-pie order, and in a constant state of perfection against the Imperial owner's frequent and unannounced arrivals. It includes immense brick-yards, of which the latter is not a little proud; a forge, always in full swing; long rows of stables, displaying all the best inventions in the way of sanitation and ventilation; some handsome outbuildings and granaries, and a goodly number of irrigation canals keeping the broad pastures green through the hottest summers.

The dwelling-house itself is simple, but exceedingly comfortable, and over the entrance door an old horseshoe is let into the mortar, with the words "*Found by Her Majesty the Empress, September* 20, 1900," inscribed in fancy lettering—the lucky and time-honored properties of a rusty horseshoe being evidently of some importance even to Monarchs.

When at Kadinen, the green, leafy, silent country is

between Germany's Emperor and the world. The life he leads there is almost austerely simple in all its customs; his children play and run about joyously, like young swallows chirping under the eaves in midsummer, and the entire place is wholly unlike an Imperial residence, for the pomps and vanities and magnificences of the world find not their way there.

The Empress, in her still, serene, serious fashion, enjoys these sojourns exceedingly, and accomplishes all the tasks she has set herself with unfaltering perseverance. The peasants for miles around come and confide their troubles to her where she sits after breakfast before the one-storied, mansard-roofed homestead, with the gay sunshine gleaming in the gold of her hair, and streaming upon the tiny lakelet at her feet, all framed with mouse-ear and forget-me-nots.

Her plain gown, her hands usually filled with flowers, her kindly eyes shaded by her large gardening hat, make a picture against the brightness of the scene even more attractive than her satins and her glorious jewels can accomplish, surrounded by all the blaze and splendor of a great ball in the Throne-Room of her husband's palace.

To say that the Emperor likes the sea is not to state his case fairly, for he does far more than like it. The hardest North Sea weather leaves him quite content to pace the deck of his yacht in his gleaming oilskins, and muddy waters, gray skies, cold rains, and moaning winds have no effect whatsoever on his cheerfulness. Aye, even fog, this sailor's deadliest foe, cannot do that. He loves to watch the angry sun sink, after a stormy day, below the red-gray clouds on the tempestuous horizon, and to follow with his experienced glance the vessel pitching her nose into the green waves, and throwing from time to time a cloud of spray and spindrift over

the length of her decks, like a bird at its bath. His deep eyes laugh then in the shadow of his black sou'wester, as they laugh at bad and good weather alike wherever he is in command, but especially at bad weather—this is a well-defined characteristic of those who have a passion for the sea, and for maritime matters in general. His interest in that order of things dates from the earliest days of his boyhood, when, as already recorded, he played at being Admiral of a numberless toy-fleet on the tranquil waters of the "*Heiligen-See*" at Potsdam. No other German Ruler has ever given so much thought and attention to naval matters, or acquired so much knowledge in that quarter, which is just why he can stand on the dripping deck of a pitching and rolling ship and laugh.

Familiarity proverbially brings contempt for danger of all kinds.

To crash into the sea at full speed is far from being an unpleasant sensation—for people blessed with those convenient members called sea-legs—and to watch each separate breaker as it leaps over the bow and washes aft in a delicious smother of prismatic color. I heard, once, a naval officer who had cruised with the Emperor, conclusively remark that he is "*the right sort*"—a thing I knew before being told—as also that he is what the British tar calls very graphically, "*a handy man.*" Anyway, this eminently versatile Monarch certainly carries with him, wherever he goes, the brisk atmosphere of the sea and its influence, which tightens a man's muscles and teaches him to observe the outward signs of nature and of the human race as well. One encounters such examples of old Father Ocean's tarry teachings even in the life of many a simple sailor, and such encounters are invariably pleasing.

The Northern sea-coast is not lovely, indeed, politeness

alone prevents one from frankly calling it ugly, in the cold, wind-swept, yellowish nakedness of its endless sand-dunes. Everywhere, as far as the eye can reach inland, there are mostly sand-dunes, bounded here and there on the horizon-line by low pine and juniper-scrub fringed with thin, scraggy, maritime vegetation, which is shaken by the wind like the hair of drowning creatures, and is sometimes almost hidden out of sight by the fine, drifting sand, which moves eternally to and fro in imitation of the neighboring waves.

Such a combination looks rather forlorn even in the height of summer, when the water consents on occasion to be blue and the eternal dunes borrow a more golden tint from the reflected sun-rays; but to those who have been born in that neighborhood, the wellnigh colorless uniformity of the landscape, the pearly light which broods over these deserts, have their undeniable charm, rendered marvellously precious by the fact that these monotonous plains speak to them of home. Moreover, it is a famous background—seaground if you prefer it—to set off yachts, taut, trim, and sparkling with fresh paint and polished brass—which is the enviable and permanent condition of all Emperor William's sailing or steam vessels.

The Friesian Islands, the Bay of Kiel, those of Dantzig, and of Pomerania, Rügen the Fair, the deeply scalloped shores of West and of East Prussia, indented and varied by glassy sheets of land-locked, motionless water, where long-legged, solemn herons stand mournfully—all these places are inspected in turn by those luxurious craft, whereon the strong individuality of William is so clearly discernible, and where even far more than on a line o' battle-ship everything seems to fit into place — every man into his duties.

CHAPTER X

THERE is one human being within Germany's fair Empire who is not at all awed by Germany's stern and imposing Ruler—one, and only one, I make bold to state. This audacious being is a brisk little lady, very quick and graceful, but not in the least fussy, possessed of an air of quiet and unshakable confidence, a silvery voice, a light, fairy-like form, an elastic, joyous step—such as is of more service to a woman wherever she may go, and whoever she may be, than the most enticing beauty—long, thick, silky golden hair, a pair of big, merry, reckless blue eyes, an immense amount of mischief and of dauntless pluck, and the best little heart in the world. "*Voilà!*" I have named "*Prinzesschen*," the seventh child and only daughter of His Majesty Emperor William II.

This charming little Princess, who is hurrying through life and gathering huge enjoyment from the process, practical like her illustrious papa, always cheerful, and universally adored, is exceedingly astute, and is versed in the difficult, and until her advent quite undiscovered, art of leading this illustrious parent by a silken thread of extreme tenuity, wherever it may be the wish of his leader to make him go.

"*Prinzesschen*" is, if I am to tell the unvarnished truth, rather a handful, and she manages her "*Papachen*"—as she calls him—with vast spirit and a blithe and most amusing indifference to the sterner and grimmer sides of this august Monarch's nature.

She is wont to remark, in the pretty, idiomatic, and somewhat slangy English she speaks in preference to German—which she declares to be a less "*distinguished*" language—that when "*Papachen*" is away it is "*jolly slow work*" for her to be at home! She adores her mother, but her father she absolutely idolizes, and the feeling is reciprocated by the Emperor, who confesses with a somewhat shamefaced and wholly delightful smile that he is most lamentably at the mercy of this tyrannical little lady.

Her wholesale optimism positively seems to take his breath away. She makes her multifarious demands upon his time and person with a certain careless "*aplomb*" which must unquestionably prove somewhat disconcerting to his autocratic habits. She is a little witch, bewilderingly changeable, at one moment a mere baby, and in the next quite preternaturally wise, now a heedless tomboy, a second later a proud woman of the world, appearing to know far more of that abode of wisdom than she well can!

Her delicate coloring comes and goes with every new impression; her very eyes seem to continually alter in hue and even shape, clouding or brightening, narrowing or widening with each different mood, in the most alluring fashion. She is at the beginning of that brief period of a feminine existence wherein she dares to state quite clearly and openly what she wants, and she decidedly makes the most of it; moreover, when she is chided—which does not often occur, for she is, in the main, a thoroughly good little Princess—she takes this mild form of remonstrance with demurely closed lips, as if the only retort she could think of was hardly fit for enunciation, nods an airy acquiescence, greatly superior to any excuse or argument she could possibly put forward, and flits away with the lightness of breeze-

A LESSON IN STRATEGY!

blown thistledown to seek other causes of contravention.

When she wants something very badly indeed "*Prinzesschen's*" voice becomes strangely deep and she speaks with immense solemnity, her rosy face adopts an extremely sober expression, and she has a very effective way of dropping her thickly fringed eyelids. When her demand is rejected her eyes cloud, and a kind of scorn, a kind of pity, and a kind of weary longanimity look from them. This is her attitude when it is not of "*Papachen*" that she is asking something. In his case affairs proceed on different lines, for with him she is most adorably coquettish and alluring, while her tactics would have done honor to Moltke himself.

With her exquisitely fine golden hair waving in gleaming, crinkly torrents about her shoulders, she curls herself up upon his knee and gazes at him with great intentness through her thick lashes — a veritable little bundle of wisdom and tenderness—and the smile in the depths of her father's eyes is like silent music to her, for she understands it admirably, and attunes her own accordingly.

He is, by-the-way, very speedily laid low by her wiles, and the group they form would furnish admirable material for a delicious "*genre*" picture, if only there were nowadays any "*genre*" painters left who knew how to paint.

Poor Autocrat! He realizes his position with the painful joyousness of self-defeat!

When very stern people are won over by mere coaxing, one would fancy that they take it hard, but this is not the case here, for when the little fairy, having gained her point, drifts away on the wings of delight, I am told that her willing victim diversifies the humiliation of having been so easily beaten by catches of laughter that have

no splenetic ring in them, as a vision of the dainty little triumphant figure of his all-conquering daughter recurrently

> "—flashes upon that inward eye
> Which is the bliss of solitude!"

"*Prinzesschen*," as her father did before her, loves Potsdam, because there she is as free as the wild birds of the Imperial park. She plays on the brim of the lake, gazing occasionally into the laughing, dancing, rippling waters, blue and green in the shade, and shot with silver and golden light, like fluorspar, where the sun touches them, as if expecting to see some nix or mermaid emerge from its depths to join in her games, for her oft-repeated declaration that she is "*just like Papachen*" has some sound truths in it, including the mixture of tireless energy and of a slight mysticism—ordinarily severely kept in the background—which characterizes them both.

So, in her quieter moods, "*Prinzesschen*" loves to sit by the lake, listening to the music of the water, of the overhanging leaves, and of the birds twittering above her head, and when any one comes to disturb her at those moments, she holds up a warning finger, and whispers a peremptory and admonitory "Sh-h-h," which carries with it the conviction that it is wise to leave her undisturbed, for to quote her again, "*there is nobody who really understands her save Papachen.*"

An attaching, attractive, delightful child, this little "*Prinzesschen*," and no wonder that she should be the apple of her father's eye, for even her freaks and fancies are lovable. But alas! alas! the Autocrat has found his master, which is of course a lamentable catastrophe!

After "*Papachen*" and "*Mamachen*," the "*grown-up*" of whom "*Prinzesschen*" is perhaps the fondest is "*Uncle Henry.*"

This charming sailor-Prince is endowed with a love of

fun and an infectious gayety which finds immense favor with children. He is the life of the Court of Berlin, and can be characterized by the graphic German adjective, "*leutselig*," which I fear is as untranslatable as "*gemüthlich!*" The Emperor himself is never so good tempered and cheery as when he has his brother near him, for a real, deep, and lasting affection exists between these two men, dissimilar in a great many ways.

Prince Henry's lips are almost always curling in laughter, his eyes dancing with merriment, when he is at home; in an instant his whole face lights up and he becomes a mere boy, playing with his children and those of his brother as if he enjoyed the romp on his own account. One of his delights is also to give himself body and soul to the practice of harmless practical jokes, which have the gift of invariably making his Imperial brother laugh heartily.

Prince Henry possesses the happy power of devoting his entire attention to whatever work or pleasure he may, for the moment, have in hand, which is, I have noticed, a peculiarity of sailors. Moreover, the more one sees of Prince Henry the stronger grows one's admiration for him, for each day one discovers some new proof of his thoughtfulness for others, forgetfulness of self, and the extreme goodness of heart and simplicity of manner which endear him to all those with whom he comes in contact.

The great and unswerving affection which the Emperor bears this younger brother gives undeniable evidence of the real magnanimity of the Kaiser's character, for it is a sad but a true fact, that everything that could possibly have been done in the past to render him jealous of Prince Henry was done. He, Prince Henry, was always favored at the expense of his elder brother—in fact, he was so constantly and openly treated as a privi-

leged favorite that any but a very noble and courageous mind would have been soured against him for all eternity.

There are many sorts of courage in this world—that of the soldier, the sailor, the explorer, the courage that is strongly dependent on emulation, that which is purely defensive, that, again, which faces solitude and continuous risks with steady intrepidity; but higher than all those is the wonderful courage of the man or woman who faces, without a murmur or pang of jealousy, a long-continued course of injustice; that is different from all other courages, for it comes direct from Heaven.

But there is a sad lack of dramatic effect about awkward situations when thus courageously accepted. The brothers did not scowl at each other, they never assumed defiant attitudes and hurled anathemas at one another's heads, no sinister glances were exchanged, no sombre plots hatched; truly the thing was decidedly tame, for William not only succeeded in retaining intact the full amount of affection he had always given his brother, but went even farther than that, for his sight remained so clear throughout that he did Prince Henry the rare justice of realizing how innocent he had always remained of intentionally attracting towards himself the marked and constant tokens of favoritism which were untiringly heaped upon him.

Alas! why is it that I should be so ill-advised as to allow truth to trim my lamp, sober fact to limit my narrow little path, and to have, therefore, to record most solemnly here that nothing dramatic occurred, and that there never was even so much as a cloud between William and Henry. Indeed, the former plodded on his weary way, fighting bravely and doggedly, quietly and wittingly, against odds sometimes so disproportionate as to render one sceptical regarding the ways and de-

signs of Providence, and to-day he and his only brother are what they have always been—namely, the most loyal and devoted of friends.

Mutual respect has an important place in the love they bear each other, and only too often brotherly affection is devoid of this quality. Even when William knew that his younger brother was more beloved than himself, he was content that it should be so—proud of his cleverness, his quickness, of his brilliant achievements, while Henry was always fully aware that his grimmer, sterner brother was a man such as one encounters but seldom in this weary worldly pilgrimage. The consequence of this mutual appreciation is that there is in their intercourse a peculiar half-expressed deference for each other's feelings, which is of rare and beautiful quality.

Their paths in life divided at a very early age, and as each has pressed on with firm and plucky strides upon his predestined road, the material distance between them has grown apace, but entirely without their ever drifting apart in heart or soul. Withal the deeply rooted affection between them has remained untouched, unspoiled, and the wonderfully strong tie of kinship and of genuine sympathy has never been weakened by the strain of years or of distance.

All the Emperor's sisters, excepting Princess Charlotte (Hereditary Princess of Saxe-Meiningen), who is only a year younger, having been born much later than himself—that is, Princess Victoria (Princess of Schaumburg-Lippe) in 1866, Princess Sophia (Crown Princess of Greece) in 1870, and Princess Marguerite (Princess of Hesse-Altenbourg) in 1872—were never companions for him.

With regard to Princess Charlotte, it was different, for throughout their early youth they were much

thrown together. Indeed, in the days when they were both very young, the Emperor showed a strong sympathy for this sister, since she shared with him the disadvantage of being severely unappreciated, and his heart naturally warmed towards the poor little girl, who, like himself, was treated with so extreme a degree of strictness, snubbed on every occasion, and made to feel that the other children were looked upon as vastly superior to them in every respect.

The youth of poor Charlotte was not much happier than his own, excepting for the fact that she did not take her troubles as seriously to heart as he did. She was a graceful, pretty girl, slender, and well made, with finely modelled hands and feet, and an expressive and interesting countenance. Her eyes, large and vivacious, shone with wit; her mouth, not small but charmingly curved, showed when laughing two rows of lovely teeth; the nose, which was too long, was delicately shaped, and she had a profusion of soft bright hair curving in graceful waves around her little ears.

Very merry and lively was she when not too frequently repressed and scolded; indeed, a flood of uncontrollable activity, mental and physical, seemed to well up in her at such times, and she looked as if she were casting about for an outlet to this abrupt and vehement ardor, coupled with what seemed a torment of uneasiness and acute impatience.

Her marriage was something of a surprise to the Berlinese, for Prince Bernhardt of Saxe-Meiningen, although a charming cavalier, was not wealthy, nor did he occupy a very lofty position, and it was rumored, moreover, that love had very little to do on either side with this union, which estranged the Princess from her favorite brother, and separated them during the greater portion of each year. However, to the Princess there was an obvious ad-

CHARLOTTE, HEREDITARY PRINCESS OF SAXE-MEININGEN,
ELDEST SISTER OF THE EMPEROR

vantage in becoming emancipated and free to follow her own tastes, and to this she sacrificed everything else.

Princess Charlotte is to-day still one of the most marked personalities of the German Court. She has not been always, since her marriage, on the best of terms with her Imperial brother, but their alleged quarrels have, as all the rest, been greatly exaggerated.

She is a brilliantly clever woman, endowed with a great deal of satirical self-possession, and has an odd habit of replying to merely mental questions, or of alluding calmly to unuttered comments, which is rather startling, and comes from a very unusual power of divination, and from a great facility in reading character. Many people find her extremely fascinating, and she is undoubtedly "*chic*"—be this trivial expression kindly forgiven—she is also a very well read and highly cultivated woman, betraying her deep knowledge of many things in a casual fashion, as if entirely free from any desire to impose it upon or to share it with others, and, although mockery and sarcasm lurk in most of her sayings, she is, however, wherever she goes, generally speaking, the centre of attraction and the object of much homage.

It is known to very few that the Emperor, while still Prince William, spent two weeks in Paris in the summer of 1878—the year of the great Exhibition—with Princess Charlotte and her husband. He was attended by Major von Liebenau and Lieutenant von Jacobi, and the whole party observed throughout their stay the strictest incognito, carefully avoiding the German Embassy, and living very quietly and "*bourgeoisement*"; Prince William and his gentlemen at the Hôtel Mirabeau, while Prince Bernhardt and Princess Charlotte, attended by Countess Hedwig von Brühl and Count Götz von Seckendorff, stayed at the Hôtel Chatham.

Prince William enjoyed every moment of this little pleasure trip, from the time when the train, wherein he travelled quite unobtrusively in his character of private gentleman, first began to steam through the flower-studded pastures of France, to the minute when he had to bid farewell to this fertile land, for which he has always entertained a deep sympathy.

He was only nineteen years old then, and took a boyish delight in making himself personally acquainted with its luxuriant beauty, the low, thatch-roofed cottages smothered in verdure, the beautiful old church-spires raising their lacelike stone-work above a sea of foliage, and the prosperous farm-houses, of which he had read and heard so much.

The ancient, gray mills dipping their antique paddle-wheels into the foam-broidered waters of swift brooks, or stretching their gaunt arms and weather-beaten canvas sails to the flower-scented breeze, the aged, square towers buried in a labyrinth of veteran trees—the whole landscape, so clear, bright, and full of lovely color, pleased his artistic eye, and when he reached great, glittering Paris his joy knew no bounds. He was enchanted with the novelty of it all.

The weather was already warm, roses were being trundled by the million through the brilliant streets, filling the air with their fragrance, and he wandered about "*en touriste*," gazing up rapturously at the splendid twin towers of Notre-Dame, the massive beauty of the Arc de Triomphe, the slender elegance of the Colonne Vendôme, or loitered on the great bridges spanning the Seine, to watch the historic river flowing rapidly and eddying round the stone piers beneath him with a liquid, refreshing sound.

All the tragedies, the mysteries, the passions, and the sorrows of the "*city of revolutions*" seemed to pass

murmuring through his imagination, as he stood upon the thronged pavement during these whimsical "*flâneries.*" The Louvre looming up in the silvery light of the moon made him think of the fateful night of St. Bartholomew, and of his illustrious ancestor Coligny, for the face of the superb building looks grim, inscrutable, and ruthless in this rather theatrical illumination, like a face confronting everything in the world without fear, without pity, without remorse; and even when he saw it at noon, with the glory of the sunrays dancing upon it and bringing out the exquisite delicacy of its carvings and unrivalled ornamentation, he received from it the same impression.

Versailles also took a strong hold upon his fancy! There his grandfather had been proclaimed German Emperor, but this was not its chief interest in the eyes of a young man whose innate delicacy of feeling slightly recoiled at this unnecessarily triumphant act, which, counselled and implacably urged by Bismarck—it had not by any means met with the unalloyed approval of William I.—had caused so much additional humiliation to the vanquished.

No! to Prince William, Louis Quatorze's stupendous palace seemed filled yet with the sound of long-vanished footsteps. The marvellous fountains of the park, scattering prismatic drops on the deliciously carved lips of their deep basins, fascinated him with their dim suggestion of a gentle rain of tears falling continually in memory of all that was dead and gone. He could see in the vast halls and salons of the Castle itself, naught but the shadows of long ago falling aslant the polished floors, and he was carried away completely by the thought of what had been.

It was only natural that to this enthusiastic imagination of nineteen it should have appeared as if the gra-

cious forms of La Vallière and of Montespan were still roaming about the flower-gardens, as if the clinking spurs of d'Artagnan still resounded on the moss-grown pavement of the "*Cour d'Honneur*," while the moist, perfumed breath of the "*Plaisaunce*" appeared to the Prussian Prince like a sad, live thing, striving to edge its weary way among a sacrilegious multitude of sightseers and the flowing tides of modern life, towards the few who could feel and understand.

The "*Exposition Universelle*" interested him, "*mais ce n'était plus la même chose.*" He enjoyed it all well enough, and with his ever-consuming thirst for learning he made much of the hours he spent there, putting them to excellent use, but the past of France was what electrified him. It brought him new and delightful sensations to study it on the spot, to stand as it were on the edge of vanished centuries, looking back on long vistas of experiences and adventures redolent with courage and glory.

This was what he liked.

To go and hear Sarah Bernhardt's melodious voice in "*Hernani*," to lunch with Sir Richard Wallace at Bagatelle, to drive in the Bois de Boulogne as a mere unit amid a crowd of ardent pleasure-seekers, greedy financiers, noisy journalists, canary-haired "*cocottes*," bumptious politicians, loudly garbed "*Rastaquouires*," was novel and amusing, but it did not stir him as did his retrospective wanderings through old Paris, although he felt throughout the strange attraction of crowds, and the infinite possibilities of adventure that lurked therein.

The young Princes and the Princess did modern Paris very thoroughly, piloted by the late Count Arco and by my present husband, who had been one of William's boyhood friends and playmates. They even went up in the huge "*Balon-Captif*" tethered on the Place des

BERNHARDT, HEREDITARY PRINCE OF SAXE-MEININGEN, HUSBAND OF PRINCESS CHARLOTTE, THE EMPEROR'S ELDEST SISTER

Tuileries, but such experiences, although furnishing a certain glamour of excitement and considerable "*imprévu*" can scarcely be reckoned among the romantic aspects of their sojourn.

Being given the fact that their presence was entirely unknown to the official world and to the public, it is interesting to speculate as to what might have happened had the frivolous Parisian populace, whose sympathies ever change and flow this way and that, now circling about one personage, now about another, discovered the Prince's identity. Would the feeling of the moment have made of him a victim or a hero?

In those days the hatred for everything German was still very bitter in the capital of France—indeed, among the "*bourgeoisie*" and the working-classes it had something unutterably sordid, coarse, and brutal in its tenor; the lower and middle-class French could not behave decently to any German-speaking person then, and had they been translated "*en bloc*" to the Heavenly City—horrible thought!—they would have wandered through its golden streets seeking what Teuton they might insult and possibly devour. Indeed, there was a sort of supreme obstinacy in their inability to refrain from invective, or to listen to the dictates of reason and of decency. Was not the late King Alfonso XII. of Spain subjected to all sorts of indignities, some years later, by the Parisian "*canaille*," solely on account of his having been appointed honorary colonel of a German Lancer Regiment by Emperor William I.?

On the other hand, the bravery shown by Prince William in thus coming to place himself in the lion's mouth might have caused one of those revulsions of feeling which no one can foretell, and Paris might have gone down before him with that sudden and complete prostration of itself before a new idol which is so character-

istic of it, and is so exceedingly misleading to the idols inclined to imagine that their apotheoses will be eternal.

Yet, as a rule, the subterranean forces of Paris are more apt to display themselves unpleasantly, and to pour out of their sombre retreats, like snakes when they scent prey. The spectacle is not exhilarating or comforting, nor is Paris now a pleasing city for Royalties to visit, either incognito or otherwise, for commonsense has long ere this hidden its diminished head before the sovereign will of its gutters and slums.

However, Prince William was not a man to be moved by considerations of prudence, for, as he himself says, "if one were to take into serious consideration the dangers represented by Nihilistic bombs, Socialistic projectiles, and the inconstancy of mobs, why, one would have no time to do one's work." So he calmly continued to roam about those corners of Paris which retain the memories and the flavor of other days, and are untouched as yet by all the changes of our prosaic, levelling, demolishing period, and he spent many a summer afternoon wandering in those mazes of narrow streets that are practically unknown to the ordinary tourist. Truly brave people have an immense scorn for the ills that the populace may wreak. There were many such who ascended the steps of the guillotine in the Reign of Terror, without giving the abject, unwashed mob below the gratification of being able to flatter itself that the breath of those doomed aristocrats came in the least more quickly, or that their pulses were in the least uneven.

I do not suppose that all the visits William has paid to the other great capitals of Europe since his accession to the Throne have given him the pleasure afforded by this secret trip to Paris. An official visit there is still quite out of the question, although the kindliness of

his attitude towards that once so great country ought to have borne better fruit than the small and mean acrimony with which it was met in most quarters.

His conciliatory intentions have been and are still very marked, and it is a pity that France should have so entirely forgotten her ancient traditions of perfect and gracious "*courtoisie*," and the politeness which a civilized people should consider it an honor to display towards an illustrious and generously inclined Sovereign.

It is true that a nation which allows itself to be influenced by politicians such as Millerand, Cassagnac, Combes, Georges Berry, Maurice Barrès, Edouard Lockroy, and that interesting personage, Rochefort—"*en voilà pour tous les goûts*"—can no longer be regarded as sane, or even as able to determine what is seemly and what is not, else it would be patent even to French eyes that as Emperor William was eleven years old in 1870–71, it is singularly illogical to make him responsible for the "*faits d'armes*" of the generations preceding him, or for the deeds that may or may not have been committed by Germans while on French territory during his childhood. All this is puerile and futile, and calculated to give one but a poor opinion of the so-called progress of civilization! François I. thought it not beneath his dignity to accord a magnificent reception to Charles V., whose prisoner he had been, nor to show him all the respect and deference due to an honored guest; but France's present "*excess of patriotism*" does not permit her to imitate so chivalrous an example.

One can scarcely be surprised, however, since a nation that destroys its altars and makes war upon harmless nuns and priests, nay, expels from its midst with unparalleled brutality the "*Petites Soeurs des Pauvres*" and the "*Frères de Saint Vincent de Paul*," whose sole occupation and aim in life was to nurse the poor and

sick, and to beg from the wealthy wherewithal to assist those in need, is surely on a precipitous downward grade, leading to the final abyss of anarchy and dissolution.

Never has Emperor William done a kinder, a wiser, or a more diplomatic thing than when he opened wide the doors of Germany to the religious congregations expelled from France; because, after all, let people say what they will, they have been cruelly treated in their own land, which strangely forgets that, to say the very least, it is in monasteries that the refinements of civilization have originated, that the fine arts and sciences have always found a refuge, and that the primordial wealth of ungrateful France had its root, within the walls of those busy, untiring "*Confrèries*," who taught the peasants, in days of long ago, the precious secrets of wood-lore and agriculture.

Our modern times are so prosaic and so absolutely devoid of charm, and the life most people lead now is so unattractive a routine, so hurried, so material, and so gross under its crackling varnish, that truth and the past are generally quite ruthlessly pushed hand in hand to the wall. Emperor William is not blinded, however, by the intense restlessness, the incessant intrigue, the endless conflicts of minds and beliefs which characterize our epoch, and his "*haute politique*" deserves the name in full, for it is wholly innocent of all trace of "*partipris*."

He does not pledge himself to one side or another, but takes his time, and looks into the heart of a question before deciding upon it, bringing his conscience to bear fully upon his final resolve. His policies are founded upon real conviction, and are never a mere mechanical repetition of what others have thought or have done; he is guided simply by his ideas of right and

wrong, and is quite unbiased. Such singleness of purpose and honesty of research are things too meritorious in themselves to need encomium; and how different they are, too, from the rash and blind acceptance of a policy merely inherited or advised, which so frequently disfigures the conduct of a "*Chef de parti.*"

Most political leaders talk a great deal, but in their hearts they know well that they simply try to patch up what is amiss, so that existing circumstances may last out their own time, and that they really care extraordinarily little about anything else that may come afterwards. "*Après nous le deluge!*" is so convenient a maxim. Now William II. thinks for himself; he earnestly wishes not only to be of use to his subjects now, and to his generation, but also to accomplish much that will be good and profitable in an after-time. None better than he realize the priggishness, the pomposity, and the scientific "*wind-baggishness*" of the world's present status, but none have known so well how to squeeze out what good the modern orange may contain for the benefit of his own people, for their culture and their education and prosperity. He is aware that the food must be suited to the eater. His policy is an appeal to the people, they say? Ah, yes, so it is, no doubt; but with what consummate art does he lead the people to the table whereon the banquet he has prepared for them appetizingly smokes!

The secret of statesmanship is to bend the mutations of the nation's will to one's own; is it not so? The great statesman does not admit this, of course, because being a great statesman he knows that if you want the masses to go your way, it is best and wisest to allow them to believe that they go their own. That is where cleverness and "*doigté*" come in, and that is just the sort of delicate political "*doigté*" that the Emperor possesses!

Whether one be a Sovereign or a subject it is work that wins the day, and work is Emperor William's Palladium. He works almost without cessation, and this is the secret of his extraordinary weight and influence, not only as a Monarch, but, as a man, the source of his extraordinarily keen and diversified knowledge. Not content with a mere amateurish and superficial information, he probes to the very depths of his studies with quite phenomenal energy and perseverance. There is scarcely a subject upon which he is not well informed; there exist professional mechanics, engineers, chemists, architects, archæologists, philologists, and scientists of every description whose breath has fairly been taken away by the extraordinary fashion in which he has discussed with each of them his own speciality, displaying an accuracy of learning and information which seems almost unexplainable, being given that he is comparatively speaking a young man, and has led so busy a life that no great extent of time can have been devoted to the study of such sciences.

Indeed, it has been facetiously stated in the press of many lands during the last sixteen years that the Kaiser "*knows all about everything that exists!*" I trust that the preceding pages may have convinced my readers that there is more than a spice of truth in this peripatetic joke, since no one possessing the full use of his or her senses can deny that he is a splendid soldier, an equally good sailor, a successful sportsman, a musician of no mean talent, an excellent painter and draughtsman, a first-class writer and poet, too—"*a ses heures*" —an engineer and architect of considerable ability, besides being a scholar of repute and a thorough statesman, without mentioning the fact that he speaks nine or ten languages fluently, and is one of the most eloquent orators of modern times.

Several of these languages have been acquired since his accession to the Throne, and amid all his enormous stress and strain of business. Swedish, for instance, he learned—as he humorously remarks—to "spring a surprise" upon his cousin, the Crown Prince of Sweden. And surprised the Crown Prince most emphatically was when, on the occasion of one of Emperor William's recent visits to King Oscar's dominions, at a dinner following some shooting on the splendid game preserves of Count Thott, the latter's Imperial guest suddenly volunteered a remark in Swedish to the effect that the weather had been abominable throughout the day, but he hoped it would be fairer on the morrow! All the Swedes present gazed at the Emperor in open-mouthed amazement, almost unable to believe their ears, especially when William continued to converse fluently in their native idiom, just as if he had been familiar with it all his life. Such a delicate compliment was, of course, highly appreciated.

How he ever finds time—as he does—to devote to music, painting, and writing is a question as yet unsolved, and how a man of his temperament can submit himself to an iron routine that allows but very limited opportunities for recreation and amusement, or even rest, would be equally a mystery did not one remember that he has at his disposal the amulet of imagination, which can instantaneously transmute the baser metal of duty into poetic gold, even as it made unattractive Sologne blossom like the Vale of Kashmir for George Sand, and the dreary memory of the frozen desert of Poland glitter like a dazzling mirage for Chopin. This faculty of the true artist for idealization is indeed a precious gift, without which the weary load of unremitting labor that presses upon his shoulders would weigh tenfold the heavier.

Music is really one of his principal relaxations. He

possesses a wonderfully complete and valuable musical library, containing numerous volumes of the printed and manuscript harmonies of four centuries, and his knowledge on that subject, too, is remarkably intimate.

There are many—even great artists—who are apt to be at fault in their interpretation of music, but this is a reproach which cannot be addressed to him, especially when he sings, for besides being gifted with a very good voice, he knows exactly how a melody should be rendered; with him Apollo's lyre is not a school-room plaything.

His principal contribution to music is the "*Sang am Aegir*," a "*Morceau*" of great power and originality, which begins with the words "*O Aegir Herr der Fluthen, dem Nix und Nex sich beugt*" (O Aegir, Lord of the Waves, whom mermaids and mermen revere). The half sad, half heroic strain of the melody has the sense of some mystery about it, of something concealed yet suggested, which is very fascinating and attaching, and it is wonderful to realize that it was created by a man who lives for the greater portion of his life in an atmosphere of practical politics and heavy cares, obliged to put forward at every instant the hardest, keenest intellectuality in order to cope with the difficulties of his lofty office.

When, after an evening devoted to melody, he is met in the early morning by the heaps of official dry-as-dust papers covering his writing-table, he must sometimes, for all his philosophy and extreme adaptability to the surroundings of the moment, sigh at this brusque re-entrance into a land of prose, where nothing romantic can possibly intrude itself, and which must occasionally seem insupportably absurd to him in its pompous fret and fumings.

One accomplishment of the Emperor's which is characteristic of his tastes, as regards both its rarity as a study and the power of its appeal to the sense of the beautiful, is his knowledge of gems.

There are few jewel merchants who can boast of so perfect a judgment of precious stones as that which he possesses. He is a really remarkable connoisseur, can tell after one long gaze within the changeful light of a gem its accurate value, and is said to be rarely at fault in his verdict.

It is quite impossible to mention before him a gem of which he has not heard, jargoons, amazzonites, argirites, variolites, asterias, chalcedony and beryls being as familiar to him as emeralds, sapphires, diamonds, and rubies are to the ordinary layman, and when he selects a jewel one can be certain that it is as perfect as a jewel can be.

And what, after all, is more fascinating than a precious stone? What can be compared with the soft beauty of a flawless emerald—save the mark!—the all-conquering silver fires of a truly white diamond, the endless depth of a clear, purplish-blue sapphire, with its exquisite blending of two regally wedded colors, so translucent, so serenely pure, and which looks as if it must be velvety to the touch? What glory can equal that which slumbers in the torchlike luminance of a ruby, what delicious delicacy is that of the pearl?

The beautiful, eloquent silence of gems takes those who understand it straight into fairy-land, and makes them dream beautiful dreams, because gems have no connection with the loathsome things of life, and being deathless are a joy forever. Women are as a rule supposed to love jewels—they think they love them—but their greed for them is mostly prompted by vanity, since they think that to wear such gorgeous ornaments enhances their appearance, and arouses jealousy in the

hearts of other women—not an aim to be despised by them—but *that* is not real love. The true love of gems is based on a comprehension of the potent charm wielded by the crystallized magnificence of objects so greatly impregnated with a mystery, which gives full scope to the flow of imagination and of phantasy.

No artistic temperament is complete without this particular love. Some people may think this statement exaggerated. How few understand the inexpressible attraction of those beautiful things coming from far away, from the heart of mountains or the translucent depths of the ocean, and which have journeyed, many of them, since the beginning of the world, from country to country, from land to land, accompanied by an ever-increasing legendary value, by the renown of a magical loveliness which nothing can surpass, that has watched the march of centuries with the same unimpaired clear serenity, the same imperturbable and imperishable lustre!

Is it strange that we poor dreamers of dreams, whose lives are so short and so arduous—whatever may be our status—should find solace and comfort in gazing at the unchangeable splendor of an object that we fancy has endured since the rising of that terrific tempest which roared through the black night when the world was born, and has been exposed to the amazing vicissitudes of millions of years without losing a tithe of its marvellous vivaciousness, its delicious power to grasp the sun-rays and treasure them within their innermost being, to smile back even at the faint luminance of the moon?

Is it so incomprehensible that we, who make of them the trusted messengers of love and of gratitude, the heralds of passion, the interpreters of our innermost feelings, should feel that they are not soulless or frigid, but that, like living creatures, they have the power of

realizing our tenderness for them and of reciprocating it after their own fashion—by bringing us luck, perchance, or merely even by dispelling with their exquisite radiance the gloom and discouragement which so often, alas! enwrap our poor weak souls when we experience more than usual the bitterness of life?

An occultistic theory! Oh! not at all; a very well proven fact, on the contrary! How could it be possible that gems which can give a thousand things — light, color, brilliance, delight, not to mention envy, jealousy, and all their derivatives—could receive a deep, genuine love and remain absolutely unaffected thereby? Do they not really retain amid all their prismatic fires the fire of such a love? But, bah! Here I am allowing myself to be carried away by my own pet theories concerning the eternal law of exchange—that law which governs the universe, and which so few interpret aright, and also by my love for those beautiful pure things brought from the heart of the mountains or the depths of the oceans, and which alone here below are exempt from undergoing that hideous transformation which death brings to all others.

I am far from my starting-point, and yet, mayhap, not so very much so, since the above lines can very well serve as an explanation of Emperor William's fondness for, and marvellous knowledge of, gems.

As is his invariable custom, he has made a point to find out all he could about the nature, the sources, the mining, the cutting, the testing, and the value of precious stones. Much study and attention is required to attain a thorough comprehension of their properties and appearance, but to the really cultured it is one of singular interest, and one of the best known experts in Europe declared, not long ago, that William II. is possessed of a quite unusual, practical, and scientific under-

standing in this matter, which in Germany is known under the special appellation of "*Edelsteinkunde*" (the science of gems), and includes crystallography, physics, chemistry, and geology.

A remarkably clever draughtsman, the Emperor has himself designed a great many of the Empress's jewels—a diadem, for instance, of a singular elegance of form, the delicate diamond trellis-work of which is interspersed with magnificent pear-shaped pearls and surmounted by huge brilliants of the very finest water.

Some time ago Her Majesty appeared at the "*Opern Subscriptions Bälle*" wearing such splendid jewels that two celebrated experts who were present declared that their long experience had never shown them anything comparable. About her throat the Imperial lady had a necklace of enormous and absolutely priceless emeralds of an exquisite clear dark green—those rarely seen emeralds which look alive and full of a sort of marvellously eager and yet calm and soothing animation. Other emeralds sent forth their mysterious green lustre from the front of her corsage, which was literally covered with chains, plaques, and loops of diamonds flashing white, pink, yellow, green, and purple lightning as she moved. Big, smooth, milky-white pearls of enormous size, and still more enormous value, gleamed gently as they drooped over her white bosom, in the midst of the blinding flames of the diamonds. Quivering sprays of brilliants were scattered over her primrose-hued train, emitting sparks of frosty light, while the centre of all this splendor was formed by the really gigantic diamond which once glittered upon Napoleon I.'s. hat, and was found lying near his abandoned travelling-carriage on the battle-field after his defeat at Waterloo. Indeed, diamonds and emeralds shone all over her, from head to foot, with a cool glitter like that of moon-rays upon

ice and dew-drops upon foliage, while her pearls—the largest and purest pearls that ever Indian diver plunged for into the blue depths of the tropic seas—attracted the gaze and envy of all the women present. Empress Augusta-Victoria's pearls are worth millions, for they are so large, so perfect in color and shape, so lavish in their profusion that few Regalias contain such treasures.

The Emperor is very lavish in his gifts, and takes a great deal of pleasure in preparing surprises of a very delectable nature for his wife and children, continually plotting, planning, designing, and ordering, with an air of delightful secrecy, all sorts of beautiful and appropriate things to afford them pleasure. Birthdays, as well as all anniversaries, are remembered with punctilious "*mémoire du coeur*" by him.

At Easter he romps with his children in the Imperial park, searching for the daintily decorated and painted eggs which the Empress has herself concealed in the moss and ivy garlands of the undergrowth, and Christmas is celebrated at the Court of Berlin with extraordinary magnificence, although quite "*en famille*," for the Emperor makes a point of devoting himself entirely, on that occasion, to his wife and children.

It takes a man who, like William II., has a thoroughly clean bill of moral health, to throw himself body and soul, as he does, into the spirit of these Christmas preparations. He is here, there, and everywhere, at one and the same time, working with dashing rapidity, accomplishing unheard of feats of agility, directing everything, however, without any fuss or undue excitement. The almost boyish delight which he takes in these occupations is charming to witness, and in expectation of the great moment when presents will be exchanged, and the splendid trees lighted up, his mental appetite

for a full meed of joy seems, like that of the children, to grow sharper and sharper.

Berlin is always very brilliant at Christmas-time; the shops teem with gorgeous trifles, those occupied by "*Delicatessen*" displaying a Gargantuan profusion of good things to eat, decorated with sprigs of holly and garlands of small pine-branches. In the game-dealers' windows squadrons of quail and gayly plumed pheasants, mountains of partridges and quantities of wild boar and venison haunches attract the gaping attention of the multitudes, who have tramped all day through the snow-cushioned streets to purchase such holiday fare as the condition of their finances will allow. Everybody carries strings of parcels, while laughing children, whose ardor is wrought to fever-heat by the splendor of the spectacle, accompany their parents, with cheeks flushed to a rosy red and eyes sparkling like stars.

Gliding rapidly and unostentatiously in and out of the throng, a small dark brougham conveys the Empress to the establishments she patronizes, for she, too, makes a point of doing some present-buying personally and quite simply, just as if at a sign from her little finger all the merchants in her capital would not empty their choicest goods into the palace for her private selection.

Life has, for rich and poor alike, some deliciously decorated moments, Christmas is certainly the best of them all, and for Emperor William it is indeed a red-letter day. He loves to give pleasure to everybody, from the Empress down to the humblest kitchen-maid in his palace or carriage-washer in his vast stables—whom he would not be able to recognize if he met them elsewhere, and whose names he could not remember if asked to mention them. The latter, as all the Imperial servants, receive from him at Christmas a "*special*" souvenir. I advisedly say "*special*," for each present

is something quite personal, and has been the subject of much thought and of many anxious consultations between the Imperial couple.

During the weeks preceding the great day, the book wherein Her Majesty has carefully and neatly inscribed all the gifts given on preceding occasions, is meticulously perused, so that there can be no danger of repetition in the selection of the thousand and one articles to be purchased. Moreover, by means best known to themselves, and which must be singularly ingenious and delicately carried out, the individual tastes of all the palace servants are ascertained beforehand by the Emperor and Empress, as well as their particular little desires, and the latter are, therefore, satisfied with an exactitude smacking almost of the supernatural. If eyes were made for seeing and admiring, if hearts were made to understand, then must one admire and confess one's admiration of such exquisite forethought and kindness.

The early morning of December 24th finds everybody wide awake at the "*Neues Palais*"—where Christmas is usually spent—everybody fresh and wide awake and joyous, and perfectly in the scheme of the great festival. The transports of delight to which the children give vent as they flutter hither and thither, avoiding with comical leaps and bounds the vicinity of Kaiserin's great antechamber and the "*Muschelsaal*," where preparations are still going on which are to remain a dead secret till the evening; the funny little way in which "*Prinzesschen*" cocks her pretty head a bit on one side to gaze with critical enjoyment at the batch of presents she herself has prepared for her parents and brothers; the gambols and frisky scurryings of the younger boys along the interminable corridors, are the most charming things of their kind one can imagine, but the most marvellous and interesting of all is the Emperor's behavior.

Surely, on Christmas Day, he is at his very "*bestest*" best! To see him then one would think that the millstone of care has been lifted once and for all from his shoulders. He talks and jokes and laughs from the moment he appears upon the scene, as if he himself had become once more a mere youngster, and displays the qualities of the most jovial tempered man out of paradise, for he is not only full of fun himself, but the cause of continual fun and delight in others. It would be impossible while watching him to realize that he has already passed, if but by a little, what the poet calls "the flower of a sound man's youth, the golden, gladsome, romantic age of forty!"

He inhales with the appreciation of a thorough connoisseur the pungently delicious and exquisitely resinous smell of the fir-branches, so strong upon the warm air of the grand halls and salons as to seem almost ponderable, and which strangely intensifies the sweetness of the whole performance; he receives with merry effusion the Captain of the First Regiment of Guards, who presents himself punctually at eleven o'clock at the palace, bearing the Regiment's Christmas greetings and offering—a stupendous cake magnificently adorned and displaying on its rich bosom, amid brightly colored sugar arabesques, a black eagle surmounting a wide "*banderole*" with the words "*Suum-Cuique*" inscribed upon it. This is a custom handed down from the past, and which pleases the Emperor immensely, for the quaint little ceremony is as scrupulously carried out as it was in the far-away days when the Guards were granted the privilege of providing their Sovereign-Chief with this Yule delicacy.

At twelve o'clock precisely the Imperial family assemble in the breakfast-room for an informal "*déjeuner à la fourchette*," and with a view of making his children

laugh, the Emperor, who usually cares very little what he eats or drinks, pretends to be ravenously hungry, and examines the various dishes with the devoutness of an impassioned "*gourmet.*"

"Omelette, beefsteak, potatoes, '*en robe de chambre*,'" or "grilled chicken, truffled pâté"—as the case may be, he enumerates, shaking his head solemnly in admiration of the good fare set before him. "What a deliciously sustaining meal," he continues, "and how appropriate to this festive occasion! Christmas confers upon its devotees an unbounded appetite, and if they did not get the proper variety and quantity of food on this day they would not be equal to the burden of joy that is to follow"—and at the sound of his ringing laugh the Empress beams with delight, the boys expand, and "*Prinzesschen*" leaves her place to climb on his lap and pull his mustaches, all ceremony, etiquette, and other similar "*trouble-fêtes*" being banished for the nonce.

"*Papachen*" chaffs and pokes fun at his six stalwart sons, but "*Prinzesschen*" gets naught but caresses, his voice softens every time he speaks to her, and he selects with humorously anxious care the daintiest morsels and the truffled portions of every dish for the little lady's delectation, who with a coquettish little mien opens her rosy mouth dutifully to receive them.

The yellowest melancholy would not be proof against such a scene of unrestrained happiness and simple tenderness. But soon parents and children tear themselves from the pleasures of the table and are up and doing again, "*Prinzesschen*," first, however, hovering near her beloved "*Papachen*," busy with a game of make-believe—pretending that she is going to make a break for the "*strengverboten*" rooms, now gingerly, with slow, calculating up-liftings and down-puttings of her little feet,

stealing a silent march towards the proscribed region, now rapidly veering and noiselessly bounding forward, now halting, recoiling, masking herself behind some curtain or heavy piece of furniture, and peering warily over it, to be finally caught in all her grace and mischievousness within the circle of his arms and smothered with kisses.

Immediately after an early dinner, which is but a repetition of that joyous luncheon, the whole family make their way rapidly to the Empress's great antechamber, where the servants are already expectantly gathered, and everybody is at once ushered amid a regular burst of enthusiasm into the glittering presence of His Majesty the Christmas-tree.

Ah! what a tree it is! A giant among trees, magnificently vivid with its intensely green branches, its myriad pink, white, blue-and-yellow candles tipped with gleaming fire, which is dazzlingly reflected in the stars and crescents of gold and silver, the crystal icicles, mother-o'-pearl snowballs, and the hundreds of other multicolored trifles with which it is loaded.

This is the tree especially prepared for the palace servants and employés, and the Emperor and Empress, aided by their children, distribute every gift in person, accompanying each one with a few kind words and wishes, the Kaiser being in the habit of emphasizing, by a little tap on the shoulder and a singularly bright and cheery smile, those presents which he hands to old and especially valued servitors.

Patiently the children, thinking their white thoughts, dreaming their blissful dreams of a now very near future indeed, await their turn, while their mother's face, as she glides from one to the other recipient of her bounty, with her hands full of useful and pretty things, is so tender and so happy that all those who watch her feel

that they are in the presence of that most blessed and rare of all living beings, an absolutely good and true woman.

Emperor William's home is a garden of beautiful ideas at Christmas, that is very certain.

When every servant has been spoken to individually, when the grateful and reverential "*handküsse*" are over, then, and then only, do parents and children betake themselves to the mysterious "*Muschelsaal,*" towards which for many days past their thoughts have converged, and where the latter are at last allowed to go and gaze at that ninth wonder of the world—fir-trees that bear golden roses and silver lilies.

The "*Muschelsaal*" is bordered on each side, for the occasion, by verdure interspersed with holly and mistletoe, forming two graceful hedges of deep, almost solemn color, wherein dark green merges into metallic green, and metallic green dissolves into waxen whiteness and fiery carmine—that intense red and frosty pallor which much artificial light coaxes from the freshly culled berries of the plants consecrated by time-honored usage to Father Christmas.

At the lower end of the great room is the "*Crêche,*" a grotto roofed and walled with boughs, arranged to represent the stable of Bethlehem, and which contains lifelike waxen figures of the Holy Virgin and Child, of St. Joseph, of the Shepherd Kings, and of the animals which had the privilege of sharing their lowly dwelling with the infant Lord.

This "*Crêche*" is always in exquisite taste, not overloaded with ornaments, but made to look like a dim, brown little stable—the same where two thousand years ago the Wise Men worshipped. Save for the tinted light that filters through the green boughs and the magnificence of the superb apartment where it is built, it is a perfect

evocation of the past, with its hidden and unutterable simplicity and sweetness. The Blessed Mother's half-kneeling figure, her delicate profile, her long, unbound hair, her very garments are rendered with amazing artistic reality; the "Magi," prostrated devoutly in their awe and wonder before the tiny Babe cradled in His Mother's arms, fill that dim little stable with a glory eyes are not needed to see, with a music ears are not needed to hear, and from which seems to be diffused all peace, all grace, all benediction.

I need not add that it is to the Emperor that is due the amazing completeness of this ideal little nook, which he causes to be prepared each year under his immediate direction, and to be carried out according to his own ideas—beautiful and holy ones in every detail—down to the humble and lowly attitudes of those kingly shepherds offering their gorgeous gifts with a diffidence which clearly says:

"*Domine, non sum dignus!*"

Outside this magic cave the gold and silver flowering Imperial trees raise their marvellous branches, gloriously illuminating the presents charmingly disposed on square, white-draped tables.

The children are now clearly beside themselves with joy, their hair is ruffled, the wholesome pink of their comely faces shows a deeper flush, their lips are parted, their chests heave, while curious, expectant, eager, they open parcel after parcel, make inextricable knots of the ribbons carefully and gracefully looped by their mother's supple, clever fingers, and when a new surprise is revealed, cry out in a dozen different tones: "*Oh! Papachen! Oh! Mamachen!*" the immensity of their varied emotions precluding the possibility of lengthier speech.

In the mean while His Majesty William II. is just as keenly interested in his own presents as the youngest of his sons — betrays just as many many-colored astonishments and delights. His face is positively radiant, he bends down and peers intently into boxes and packages, from whence he raises half-laughing, half-moist eyes when something particularly to his taste has been discovered.

Christmas packages are so mysterious—aren't they? Filled with so many enchanting things, and such deep pleasures grow out of them! That's why they cause both pensiveness and laughter! Now his wife and children are in his arms—as many of the children as he can possibly hold at the same time without crowding out his "*Dornröschen*"—now they have all fluttered away again in quest of some new reason for fluttering back once more with another chorus of brimming gratitude.

The Empress is sure to find among her new treasures some beautiful jewel designed by her Lord, for the Emperor likes to give things that endure and are "*a joy forever*," and her blushing thanks are so girlish that they must surely carry him back to the days of their romantic courtship.

And now it is late—very late—fly away to your little bed, happy "*Prinzesschen.*" "*Gute Nacht.*" Princes Joachim, Oscar, August, Adalbert, Eitel: God speed you! Prince Wilhelm, Crown Prince of Prussia, the Christmas festivities are over, and to-morrow life begins again with its burden of joys and of labors. Hurry! hurry! know you not that to-morrow before daybreak your father will as usual give you the example of what a Prince should do, by being back at his task again—hard at work.

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Hard at work, yes, for the good of his Realm and of the fifty millions of people who so rightly trust him! Of course it is next to impossible to praise an Emperor or a King nowadays without laying one's self bare to the charge of toadyism and base flattery. This is a poor sign of our age, for why justice should not be done to a man simply because he happens to occupy a Throne, passes my understanding. So I do not hesitate to run the risk common to all those who dare to tell the truth about Crowned Heads, even when this truth chances to be of a pleasant kind, and will in consequence be once more torn to pieces by critics of all denominations. "*Malesh!*" as the Arab has it!

It would be difficult to enumerate even in the briefest fashion all that he has done for his country during his relatively short reign. "*A Monarchical form of government is almost as natural to men as it is to bees and ants,*" saith that cheerful philosopher, Schopenhauer, and Germany is a very good example of this axiom, and of the success which a Monarchy can achieve even in our time, when "*the man at the wheel*" knows his business, and attends to it.

See, for instance, how Emperor William has succeeded, by dint of a clever blending of cordiality, firmness, and friendliness, in completely dispelling the feelings of openly avowed aversion entertained for him and for Germany at the time of his accession, by several Foreign Powers, and how quickly he has gained the most prominent place in the political firmament of Europe.

When he ascended the Throne, Russia was one of the Great Powers most distinctly antagonistic to him; indeed, when William I. was on his death-bed, almost his last injunction to his grandson was to be on his guard with Russia, and to try and bear with that nation's unfriendliness and prejudice. Alexander III., who was

then on the Throne of the Great White Empire, abhorred everything German, and entertained the most vehement and unreasoning prejudice against the "young Hohenzollern" as he called him, who was soon to become a brother Sovereign. This prejudice was so pronounced that it had driven the Czar into the arms of France, and had led him to break off the alliance hitherto subsisting between Austria, Germany and Russia — nor was this all, for he managed to communicate his extreme dislike and hostility for William to the Czarina, the Czarewitz, and, in one word, to most of the other members of the House of Romanoff.

William was very well aware of all this, and yet, quite undeterred thereby, four weeks or so after his assumption of Sovereign power, he started to pay a state-visit to the Czar, disregarded the chilling nature of his reception at St. Petersburg, treating black looks and even frank antagonism as absolutely non-existent, and continued to show himself superior to petty sentiments of personal distaste where great interests were concerned, with the result that to-day he has accomplished his end, and is "*persona gratissima*" not only at the Muscovite Court, but throughout Russia, where the animosity towards Germany, so rampant sixteen years ago, has given way to perfect good-will. This achievement is of world-wide importance, for the elimination of the dread possibilities of a war between Germany and Russia is a weighty contribution to the furtherance of general peace.

In the days of which I have just spoken—that is, at the end of the eighties—William was looked upon as a wildly reckless young swashbuckler, eager to set fire to the four corners of Europe, and to plunge it into carnage and blood in order to adorn his brow with military laurels. To-day Europe has been forced to alter her opin-

ion considerably in this respect, and to shamefacedly pocket her apprehensions, for, so far, Emperor William has been a Prince of Peace and of Moderation, the steel gauntlet has been gloved with softest velvet, and although he has not thought it necessary to assert his pacific intentions by Peace Conferences and garlands of tinsel olive-branches, yet it is due to the perfection of his army as a fighting-machine, to his sagacity, his forbearance, and his sobriety of judgment, that a general "*mêlée*" has not already broken out in Europe at different critical junctures.

With regard to France, as I have already stated, Germany's Emperor has manifested an amount of tact and "*savoir-faire*" quite above praise, for any one endowed with less comprehension and patience would have been heartily disgusted and discouraged by the preposterous attitude of the French in connection with Alsace-Lorraine, and greatly irritated by the fashion in which they expressed their singularly naïve expectations.

"The German Caligula," as the Gallic press amiably designates the Emperor when he has done something to displease "*messieurs les journalistes et messieurs les hommes politiques*"—a poor combination, at best, in France—is expected, if you please, to "*hand back Alsace and Lorraine to their lawful owners, this being the only guarantee of reconciliation which the French nation can expect—the only chance of forgiveness the Emperor can look forward to!*" (Textual.)

Can anything be more ridiculous and pointless?

But far from taking offence at, or even notice of, the "*furia Francese*," Emperor William has sent large sums of money whenever any appeal was made in France for the relief of French suffering, especially in cases of sudden disaster; has behaved with the utmost magnanimity to French officers captured while committing acts of

espionage in German territory, restoring them to liberty instead of subjecting them to long years of imprisonment (*vide* Jules Simon's narrative), and has, generally speaking, heaped coals of fire on the heads of his Gallic detractors.

A French Deputy published some time ago a very magniloquent diatribe in a great Parisian daily, about the barbarism displayed by the Emperor in "*retaining against all justice and fairness a vital portion of France, brutally torn from her side in* 1871, *and still bleeding and palpitating with pain and with despair.*" This is in accordance with neither fact nor history. Alsace and Lorraine no longer "bleed and palpitate with pain and despair," while as to those Provinces being a "vital portion of France," little research is required to establish a very different opinion. Ever since the tenth century the territories in question were occupied by a purely Teutonic stock, and had been included in the old German Empire. It was only in 1648 that a portion of Alsace was ceded to France, and then only because French troops had so terribly devastated and impoverished them that the then Emperor was unable to keep them as part and parcel of the German dominions.

The slaughter of the inhabitants had been of the most wholesale description, so that the wretched survivors hated the very sight of a French uniform; indeed, the land had for many years to lie fallow, since there was not any longer a sufficient number of peasants left to cultivate the fields. Later on, Louis XIV.'s armies laid hold of the remaining portion of Alsace, but it was only after the Revolution of 1789 that all of what is now called "*Alsace-Lorraine*" was finally acquired by France.

To do them justice, the Alsatians and Lorrainers never ceased their bitter denunciations of the French, and their

openly avowed declarations of hatred against these Gallic oppressors, during the eighty-two years which preceded their recapture by the Germans. But no sooner had this occurred than they, with touching unanimity and "*ensemble*," promptly transferred this hatred to their more recent conquerors, and commenced to profess the most ardent devotion to France, since the rôle of a victim, when it arouses wide-spread sympathy, is always attractive—occasionally even of material advantage — and the Alsatians and Lorrainers are renowned for the keenness of their appreciation of the main chance.

Emperor William, however, has now won them from their beloved pose by his tactful management. He flattered them by appearing among them as often as possible; he purchased the estate of Urville, in Lorraine, and had its grand old château magnificently repaired for use as an Imperial residence, and in one way and another he has persuaded them to become as thoroughly German in politics as they are in race, character, and origin. Witness the significant fact that, whereas the troops raised in these two provinces have been hitherto stationed in other parts of the Empire, it has recently been decreed that all recruits voluntarily presenting themselves for military service shall be allowed to serve their time in Alsace-Lorraine, within easy reach of their homes and families.

There is even ground for the belief that the Emperor's policy is at length bearing fruit in France herself, and that the revengeful hatred of the French for the Germans exists to-day more in the imagination of such politicians as the above-named "agitators" than in the hearts of the French people. At all events, this would seem to be demonstrated by the open-hearted and impulsive manner in which the soldiers of these two nations fraternized

when they met face to face in China after the Boxer Revolution.

With their usual sagacity the Chinese themselves designated them collectively by the words "Fanko-pink," which, literally translated, means "French soldiers," but which they applied to the only two factions who left the Chinese women and little children unmolested, and jointly protected them from the brutality of the Japanese and other allies. Indeed, at the great "*fête*" given by the French to the Allied Powers in the "Violet City" or Imperial nucleus of Pekin in May, 1900, the "*bonne camaraderie*" of the German and French sailors and soldiers was commented upon by everybody, for after the great "*Rétraite militaire aux flambeaux*" around the famous Imperial "Lotus-Lake," long files of Teutons and Gauls in full uniform promenaded arm in arm singing, at the top of their lungs and with perfect "*ensemble*," alternate strophes of the "*Marseillaise*" and the "*Wacht am Rhein*"!

Field-Marshal Count Waldersee, pointing them out to a distinguished French naval officer with whom he was conversing, exclaimed: "*Vous voyez bien que nous sommes bons amis!*" adding with his customary good grace a few words of gratitude for the heroic manner in which, a month or so earlier, the palace he occupied had been saved from complete destruction by fire, thanks to the energetic efforts of the French soldiers who had hurried to his rescue, and concluding his little speech with the very flattering and delicately courteous remark that of all the personal souvenirs which he lost then, what he most regretted was his Cross of the Legion of Honor.

The Emperor has done wonders for his navy since his accession to the Throne. At that time he openly expressed the ambition to create for his Empire during his

reign, a fighting fleet which should rank among the greatest and most powerful of the world, and, to be truthful, he is in a fair way of accomplishing this aim. He has also completely reorganized the army—this too, just as was the case with the navy, in the face of all sorts of vexatious opposition, tacit or otherwise, emanating from moss-back veterans who objected to innovations and resented them as personal insults—and he has converted it into what is universally acknowledged to be the most perfectly ordered and armed one in the world.

In the years that have elapsed since he took the reins of government in hand, with one definite object and aim —and that aim the greatest that man craves for, the glorification of his country—he has also entirely transformed the civil administration of the Prussian Kingdom, and that of the Empire as well, endowing both with an entirely new and modern code of laws in keeping with modern times.

To complete this rather inadequate description of his achievements, it is only necessary to add, merely mentioning "*en passant*" the leading part he has taken in the matter of colonial expansion, that he has acquired at home the invaluable territory of Heligoland, which, commanding the mouth of the Elbe, was essentially necessary to Germany; and that he has also succeeded in making German influence predominant in Turkey; that excessively shrewd and clear-sighted personage, His Majesty the Sultan, listening only to him, and having of his talents and excellence of counsel the very highest possible opinion.

It is no use mincing matters at this stage of the game; better be accused, as usual, of painting the Royal lily, than, in a record the only merit of which is its veracity, to hesitate at the eleventh hour to say that no Monarch—none—has done for his country what William

II. has accomplished single-handed in sixteen short years. There is no reason why it should not be plainly stated.

He had the fortune at the age of twenty-nine to get his feet well-planted on his own particular ladder, and he has climbed it with bewildering swiftness; not with the blind self-reliance of conceit, but with a brave knowledge that he was ready to do his best. Had he not come to the Throne then, his might have become a life of opportunities denied, of powers unheeded, of capabilities ignored, a poor, misshapen shadow of what it is to-day.

The higher he now climbs the farther will his voice be heard, and it has long ere this been one to which the world cannot afford to turn a deaf ear. He is Germany's main-spring, of that there can be no doubt whatsoever, and Germany has, thanks to him, made giant steps towards that light which is not only the appreciation of perfect enlightenment—the reflection of a candle in a mirror, as it were—but the candle itself.

See, for instance, how smoothly and quickly he has made permanent provision throughout his Realm for the old age and injury of workingmen, as well as for their widows and children, in the event of the latter becoming fatherless. For years and years this possibility had been drearily and unprofitably discussed with that overtrained diplomacy, that mysterious melodramatic bating of the breath which savors so greatly of stage conspirators, and is invariably and spontaneously adopted when socialistic questions are mooted! The intentions of those thus employed are no doubt singularly amiable, albeit somewhat too romantic, and with no more backbone to them than is considered desirable for such purposes. The Emperor studied this eminently puzzling question in his keen, prompt, deeply

probing fashion, and, lo and behold! in a twinkle the machine was set going, and the problem was solved by means of State-aided insurance, and of all sorts of other special legislation of his own devising for the benefit of the laboring masses.

His was no half-hysterical effort, there was no endless controversy such as is indulged in by the socialistic leaders whose mission it seems to be to reorganize both the universe and society by means of crime and bloodshed, there were no mysteries observed, no flamboyant precautions taken, no little, stagey surprises and deceptions prepared, but a straightforward and manly grasp of the bull by the horns. He fought an open fight throughout, dealing with the most treacherous and unreliable of matters coolly, quietly, perseveringly—this man who amuses himself by outwitting the cleverest diplomatists when it suits him to do so. Whether it pleases the world or not to acknowledge the fact, it knows "*à n'en pouvoir dóuter*" that William II. is the foremost organizer it possesses, that he foresees everything, is prepared—as I have already said—for every emergency, and that he works so well because his heart is in his work.

Yes! Emperor William is an eminently practical man, and what dreaming he indulges in is done in private. Whatever he does or says in public is to all appearances perfectly spontaneous and without after-thought. He is never at a loss in the most trying emergencies, and no one ever saw a look of embarrassment or self-consciousness on his face, although it sometimes wears, when its possessor is "*en petit comité*," an expression of calm reflectiveness characterized by a curious and extraordinary readiness which makes one realize that at any moment he is "*de facto*" as well as "*de jure*" the captain of the watch.

His singularly developed gift of gathering around him with unfailing discrimination just the men he requires is a great trump in his game, for at a glance he recognizes the value and possible usefulness of each separate individual, each separate pawn upon the chess-board of State over which he bends so assiduously.

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I do not aspire to the dignity of writing a guide-book, therefore the descriptions of the palaces inhabited in rotation by the Imperial family will be, to quote Uncle Remus, "*pow'ful lackin'*"!

The "*Neues Palais*" at Potsdam alone offers points of special interest, since it is William's favorite residence, and is not merely the usual conglomeration of splendid rooms, rich with porphyry, alabaster, mosaics, gilded flourishes and stuccoed arabesques, which one is wont to associate with such gorgeous dwelling-places. The "*Neues Palais*" is something far better than that, for it is a home—if a superbly appointed one—in the full acceptation of the word, and there the Emperor has allowed his personal tastes to have full play with a really fine result. The great building has a frontage of nearly four hundred feet, and contains over two hundred rooms, halls, galleries, and salons.

Everything is furnished with the extreme of refined luxury, and in that regard the private apartments are merely a continuation of the wonderful elegance and beauty displayed in the State drawing-rooms, the banqueting-hall, the Jasper Gallery, the music-room, etc., and are replete with works of art from all quarters of the globe, gathered together mostly by the Kaiser, although his priceless collections include many costly specimens dating back to the days of Frederick the Great, and a quantity of that Monarch's personal relics,

which his descendant prizes more highly than anything else there.

Among the State apartments there is one that calls for especial mention, the famous "*Muschelsaal.*" It is very long, displaying really vast distances of fairy-like magnificence, and its decoration is of what may be termed an extravagant and exquisite phantasy. The walls are encrusted with shells of all sizes and descriptions, each one gleaming with the faint, delicate, elusive chatoyment of its particular "*nacre*," creating waves of inexpressibly beautiful iridescence wherever the eye rests. The effect is at one and the same time curiously sumptuous and wonderfully refreshing and original, making of this gallery—unique in the world—a choice retreat for all that is ideal, delicate, and lovely, a positive revelation of an artistic sense seldom encountered in Europe.

There are many other corners in this great palace which leave upon the visitor an ineffaceable impression of having dreamed and not really seen their splendor; for, save in museums, where the most admirable objects are so stiffly disposed that much of their charm and beauty are lost, one does not encounter so delicious a profusion of rarities. The design and colors of the silks and satins shot with gold, laminated with silver, embroidered and painted with the five-clawed dragons of Chinese Emperors, the amazingly chiselled, gem-inlaid bronzes, the priceless ebony carvings like petrified lace, the antique enamels, blue as enamels are no longer nowadays, the jades, the cloisonnés, the century-old lacquers brought from the Far East, are alone worthy of a sort of amazed reverence.

The "*Neues Palais*" is indeed a place of great beauty and stateliness, surrounded as it is by grand trees and close-shaven, flower-adorned turf of a singularly vivid,

BREAKFASTING, "*EN TÊTE-À-TÊTE*," ON A WINTER MORNING

emerald green. It is a poem in stone and iron, epic and epopee at one and the same time, and one cannot help gazing with enchanted eyes at its long lines of majestic terraces, the dusky avenues of its park, the vast, solemn mass of the edifice towering up against the sky, for it is a spot where lovers might well forget the world and its weight of pain. Yews and bay-trees and Himalayan cedars make perpetual verdure in the background, and immense hot-houses and orangeries make ceaseless summer within its walls, where magnificent tapestries and priceless hangings, wainscotings of preciously inlaid woods and unique paintings of Titian, Tintoretto, Rubens, Giordano, Murillo, and many other long-dead masters, meet the enraptured eye.

This is no mere gorgeous shell, from which the jewel of life is absent, but, as I have said, a homelike spot, a place redolent of "*chez soi*," that one can care about with one's whole heart, and to which, wherever one may be, one always desires to return. The flame on one's own hearth has something of the altar fires about it, something heavenly, almost sacred, something that means happiness, comfort, security, peace; and the hearths of the "*Neues Palais*" are alone typical of such feelings to its Imperial owner, for in all his other residences he is only "*de passage, tantôt ici, tantôt là*," whereas with this one it is different—it is home. One might discover this by a mere glance at the cosey breakfast-room where, every morning, the Imperial couple take the first meal of the day alone together, not even a servant being allowed to disturb this "*tête-à-tête*," during which matters intimate and political, weighty and otherwise, are discussed. For this, winter and summer alike, the Empress makes a point of rising at six o'clock, and permits nothing to prevent her appearance at the prettily decked table a few minutes before the Emperor

enters the room, since it is one of her greatest pleasures to listen to his quick, clever, earnest talk, and the plans and projects he puts before her with a characteristic art of conciseness.

Moreover, the Emperor understands yet another art to perfection, and that is to surround himself with absolutely faithful servants. They are never sure that he may not arrive at any moment, and therefore keep everything in readiness for his inspection at any hour of the day or night. He always rewards fidelity, instead of, like most people, contenting himself with merely accepting it as a due, and, in consequence, his house-servants are not the usual mob of rogues robbing their master to right and to left, and speaking evilly of him on every possible occasion. He lets the humblest man or woman in his service enjoy the moral tonic of hope, and gives them the certitude that they may, if they so wish it, rise to higher offices, which is certainly a most efficacious method of dealing with them, and one is ready to take one's oath that on none of his estates do his people steal a "*pfennig's*" worth, for not only are they one and all very generously paid, but their probity, their loyalty and affection for him are discernible in their every act and word.

This same enviable "*savoir-faire*" of his is noticeable in the methods he employed for the bringing up of his splendid family, methods that have produced extraordinarily good results in all and every instance, so far.

The Crown Prince is a healthy-minded, healthy-bodied youth, who has won golden opinions from all those who know him. Physically he resembles his mother more than his father, but mentally he is very like the Emperor, quick, energetic, courageous, thorough in everything he undertakes, and certainly destined to be one day just such another wise and clever Ruler.

He does not, in spite of all the pleasures and amusements life offers him, look lightly or heedlessly upon it. On the contrary, he very seriously realizes that one who some day will be virtually the autocratic Sovereign of fifty million people, as well as the absolute master of the greatest military power in the world, cannot waste much time by the way-side.

The years he spent at the School for Military Cadets at Ploen, and subsequently at the Bonn University, were well employed and hard-working ones, and during his holidays he was almost constantly with his father, who made a point of discussing weighty matters with him, and of making a companion of him in every sense of the word, so that a perfect and rare confidence exists between them, and that from an early age the young man has been trained in the way he should go.

The other Princes are yet too young to be definitely described, but, like their elder brother, they are wholesome in mind and body, clever, affectionate, and exceedingly good-natured and conscientious, while "*Prinzesschen*" — the very core of her father's heart and apple of his eye—I have already portrayed. Surely Emperor William can well be proud of his children, for they, indeed, do him honor, physically and morally, and there is something they will be always able to truthfully say of the father who has done so much for them, namely, that

> "Where he fixed his heart, he set his hand
> To do all things he willed."

He has willed that his children should grow up to be a crown of glory to their mother and to himself, and so they certainly have proved to be, thus far. They have not been neglected, as so many children, be they high or be they low, be they rich or be they poor, are, nowadays

only too often by their parents. They have never been allowed, metaphorically speaking, to loll into deep chairs with their knees higher than their heads, as it is the tendency of the rising generation to do, and they show not the least sign of that "*je m'enfichisme*," which marks our period as such a lamentably caddish one:

> "We shut our hearts up nowadays
> Like some old music-box that plays
> Unfashionable airs."

We have most of us forgotten, alas! the value of a well-bred calmness of demeanor and of a true courtliness of manner, but these Imperial lads at Berlin are upright, trim, and exquisitely brought up on strictly high-bred and gentlemanly lines; that is why they behave under all circumstances with that finish and absence of self-consciousness which only comes to those who have been trained by superior parents; that is why, also, they are, one and all, more attractive, more truthful, honest, noble, and worthier of praise than the greater number of their congeners, and why, lastly, they lavish upon their father and mother a love amounting almost to adoration, but by no means excluding the deepest and most touching respect and reverence.

Their anxiety while the Emperor was ailing this winter was absolutely overwhelming. Absently, mechanically, they went through their allotted tasks, for many things had suddenly become rather violently and painfully real to them, many things they had never thought of before had assumed significance and importance, shaking them with very tumultuous thoughts and feelings.

Children and very young people are slow to take alarm, but when once they do so are apt easily to overstep all bounds of reason and wisdom. These children had until then always obtained what they wanted before they

"LET NOT THY LEFT HAND KNOW"

had even learned to desire, but now they seemed to be entering dark and narrow paths of a very sombre and grewsome appearance. Would they too have to explore those roads of pain and of sorrow which so many of God's creatures are forced to traverse, with but one ardent wish in their souls, that of being granted the boon of the life they pray for?—a road of many turnings, plentifully provided with thorny hedges to tear one on the way.

When at last they reached the peace and calm of the harbor, when at last the benignity of the Emperor's malady was established beyond all manner of doubt, the mother and children looked curiously at each other with a gleam of almost fierce triumph in their haggard eyes. They seemed to have just returned from a field of battle, where they had been exposed to some murderous volley of fire and of iron. Indeed, the Empress's health gave way altogether, and at the present moment she has scarcely as yet recovered her usual spirits and equanimity.

Life is full of gravity and of tragedy, but love is the gravest part of it, for it teaches us lessons which are grave tragedies in themselves, and also how to fight a good fight.

That this short illness of Emperor William should have been so callously exploited by the sensational press on both sides of the Atlantic, did much to make this trial harder to bear both for him and his, their only compensation for so much unnecessary aggravation of annoyance being the expressions of sympathy as well as the hopes for his recovery that poured in from all sides. Certainly the trivial and quite minor operation to which he was subjected has served one purpose, besides that of once and for all removing from the minds of those who love and admire him all idea of

a serious disease; namely, that of showing very clearly how greatly he has endeared himself to the hearts of his subjects—rich and poor alike, but especially the poor, among whom he so often goes quietly abroad like Haroun-al-Rashid, with a discerning eye and a helpful hand. They have come to the conclusion that they can ill spare him; they know now that the continuance of his reign constitutes to them the best guarantee of peace and of prosperity, and their joy at his complete recovery must have gratified him profoundly.

His first outing after this recovery was one of those moments that impress themselves indelibly on the memory—a moment when words are suddenly futile, when hearts need them not to comprehend each other. The multitude cheered him madly, and the enthusiasm aroused by his reappearance among them filled the air with delighted clamors.

His chief method of making his people love him has been to make himself more and more worthy of that great love—an odd, old-fashioned theory of action, but the only one that makes the permanence of love possible!

Time, better than any pen, be it ever so convincing, will show what Germany—nay, what all Europe—has gained from the advent upon the scene of William II., a man whom so many still persist wilfully to misrepresent. He has had throughout the courage of his opinion, disdaining that of the world; he has risked all to reach his aim, sparing neither his time, his strength, nor his pains by night or by day, and his reward is at last within his hand. Who will dare to say that it is not well-earned?

THE END

IMPERATOR ET REX

WILLIAM II OF GERMANY

BY THE AUTHOR OF
THE MARTYRDOM OF AN EMPRESS